MINUTES

OF THE

EASTERN SUBORDINATE SYNOD

OF THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

HELD IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK,

APRIL 9—16, 1833.

ALBANY QUARTERLY EXTRA,
PUBLISHED BY THE ORDER OF SYNOD.

ALBANY:
PRINTED BY HOSFORD & WAIT.

PROCEEDINGS.

The following minutes of the E. S. Synod, will be read with interest by all the friends of truth, and of the purity and good order of the house of God. They contain doings of solemn import to the heritage of our Lord Jesus Christ, in this land. Some of the ministers placed under censure, were for many years of reputable standing in the church. It is painful that, in old age, such officers of the Lord's house, have become fallen stars. But we are admonished by the spirit of prophecy, that the dragon would draw the third part of the stars of heaven in his tail and cast them to the earth.* Yet let us hope and pray that the discipline of the sanctuary may be, in this faithful act, "*for edification and not for destruction*," and an example to warn the professors of religion, in all time to come, against defection, from the cause of God, from the testimony of Jesus, and from their own solemn vows. Its effect cannot fail to be salutary.

The delegates, who constituted this court of Christ, were from Vermont, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. The court was unusually harmonious and unanimous in its deliberations and decisions.

The moderator, the Rev. Wm. Gibson, is the oldest minister of the gospel, in the Reformed Presbyterian church, on this side of the Atlantic, and long known as the author of a valuable publication against the Hopkinsian errors. He has been about half a century in the holy ministry, and is yet an able minister of the New Testament. All the ministers under the general synod, except two, derive their ordination from him, as the only surviving clerical member of the Presbytery.

The Rev. Mr. Chrystie, the clerk, is also well known as the author of Strictures on Mason's Plea for Catholic communion, as many years the pastor of a Ref. Presbyteri-

* Rev. vii. 3.

an church in the city of Albany, and as a faithful and distinguished preacher of the gospel of the grace of God. He is the brother-in-law of Albert Galatin, late ambassador to France, the brother of the late Col. Chrystie of the American army, and has made great sacrifices for the cause of God. "His works praise him in the gate."

It would be difficult to imagine, any motive which the members of synod could have for inflicting this censure on men, once reputable, but a holy regard for the purity and peace of the church. They would certainly desire the aid of learned men, in building on the walls of the city of the Lord, provided, they could have it, in fidelity to the interests of a covenanted reformation, for the glory of the church's Head, and in the advancing the sanctification of the Lord's redeemed children. All have reason of thanksgiving that a very great majority of the rulers in Israel, under the jurisdiction of the E. S. Synod have demonstrated by the transactions of this judicatory, that they remain unmoved by the unholy spirit of the age, and that they are determined, through the grace of the Most High, to continue "*testifying none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say.*"—*Editors Albany Quarterly.*

MINUTES OF THE EASTERN SUB-SYNOD, REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, AT STATED MEETING.

New York, April, 1833.

The Eastern Sub-Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church met agreeably to adjournment at New York, 9th April, 1833, in the church in Chambers street at 7 P. M. and was opened with a sermon by the moderator, the Rev. Wm. Gibson, from John viii. 31, 32. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." After sermon the moderator constituted the court with prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some remarks were then made by the Rev. Dr. M'Master, by the Rev. Dr. Willson and other members of the court, on motions successively made of thanks to the moderator for his discourse, and of adjournment to another place of meeting:

the court in conclusion adjourned to meet to-morrow at 10 A. M. in the same place.

New York, April 10, 1833.

The Eastern Sub-Synod met agreeably to adjournment in the church in Chambers street at 10 A. M. and was constituted with prayer by the Rev. W. Gibson, moderator.

The moderator sent Mr. M'Leod to obtain a copy of the rules of order for the business of the court. When this was received, the Rev. Mr. Chrystie, clerk of the last meeting, was called upon by the moderator to call the roll and ascertain the members of the court. This procedure was interrupted by Mr. M'Leod and several members of the court, and a protracted discussion ensued concerning the claims of Mr. M'Leod, as clerk at the first meeting of synod, but suspended from the exercise of his office at the last, and of Mr. Chrystie as clerk of the last meeting. Mr. Chrystie was then, in answer to his request, released by the moderator from the duties of the office; and it was proposed by Dr. Willson and acceded to by two of those who advocated the exercise of the office by Mr. M'Leod, that some minister of the court should be named by the moderator to call the roll, that no member might be committed, in this stage of the business.— Against this procedure Mr. M'Leod and several others of his party intimated their determined opposition. This discussion, respecting the right of Mr. M'Leod, on the one hand, and the impropriety of synod, recognizing his officiating in his present situation, on the other, proceeded until at length the Rev. Dr. M'Master, arrogantly exercising a power belonging to the moderator, called upon and ordered Mr. M'Leod to proceed as clerk in calling the roll and ascertaining the members of the court. This disorderly procedure was promptly resisted by the majority of the court, some denying the call, and others hearing their names in silence. Soon after it was begun, and while Mr. M'Leod was irregularly performing the duties of an office which he did not possess, a motion was made in writing and seconded, and pronounced from the chair by the Rev. W. Gibson, moderator, that Mr. Chrystie should be appointed clerk pro tem. This motion was carried by a large majority, only Dr. M'Master and two or three others voting in the negative. The tumult and disturbance

made by Mr. M'Leod and his party, in loudly proceeding in their business while the moderator was thus pronouncing the resolution and its passage, induced a church officer, not a member of the court, to caution them to consider the impropriety of their disorderly disturbance of its business in this house — on which they proceeded immediately and tumultuously to withdraw, some of them, rudely and falsely, crying aloud that they were turned out of the house. Mr. Chrystie, demanded as clerk, in the presence of competent witnesses, of Mr. M'Leod, the minutes and papers of synod, which he refused. The whole party then, at once, withdrew in a tumult; the Rev. Dr. M'Master returned in a few minutes and while the remanent members were quietly and orderly proceeding in the business of regularly ascertaining the court, loudly exclaimed that "he protested against their proceedings as a disorderly mob." The court then proceeded without further interruption and the following ministers and ruling elders were present:

Ministers from N. Presbytery.	*Ruling Elders.*	
J. R. Willson, D. D.	John M'Murray,	from Albany
James Milligan	R. M'Niece,	Topsham
S. M. Willson	Alex. Shields,	Craftsbury
Robert M'Kee	Wm. Shaw,	Argyle
Western Presbytery.	Wm. Brown,	Troy
William L. Roberts	A. M'Fadden,	Sterling
John Fisher	Robert Spence,	Kortright
Southern Presbytery.	Samuel Wright,	Coldenham
William Gibson	Math. Duke,	Newburgh
James Chrystie	John Houston,	New York
Robert Gibson	Wm. Acheson,	New York
Moses Roney	Patrick Dickey,	Baltimore
David Scott	J. Renfrew, Jr.,	Conecocheague

The names of the constituent and recognised members of the court who withdrew as stated above, are Rev. Dr. S. B. Wylie, S. W. Crawford, William Willson, John Gibson, Dr. G. M'Master, John M'Master, James W. Stewart, accompanied by Mr. M'Leod, under suspension. Several ruling elders, not yet known to synod as members, also withdrew.

After ascertaining its members synod adjourned to meet this evening at 7 o'clock in the same place.

New York, April 10, 1833.

Synod met agreeably to adjournment in the church in Chambers street at 7 o'clock in the evening, and was constituted with prayer by the moderator, Rev. W. Gibson. Present same members as before, except Robert Spence who came in shortly after. The minutes of the preceding session were read and corrected.

The minutes of the *Prorenata* meeting in November last in this city were read and unanimously approved.

Resolved that the following standing committees be appointed by the moderator. 1. On unfinished business. 2. On Presbyterial reports. 3. On discipline. Each to consist of three members.

Rev. Robert M'Kee was appointed assistant clerk.

The Rev. William Gibson was, by unanimous vote, continued moderator of synod the present year; and the Rev. James Chrystie continued clerk.

Rev. Dr. J. R. Willson, chairman of the committee appointed at last meeting of synod on the letter of Rev. John Gibson, reported a letter addressed by the chairman to the Rev. Mr. Gibson, adding that no reply from Mr. Gibson had been received. The report was accepted.*

Papers were called for. A petition from thirty-one members of the church at Baltimore, complaining of the course of their pastor, and petitioning that their congregation be disjoined from his pastoral care and placed under some other Presbytery holding fast the testimony and order of the church. No. 1, laid on the table.

Also laid on the table a petition from thirty-three members of the church at Philadelphia, complaining of their pastor for departing from the doctrine of the church; requesting to be released from his pastoral charge and from the Philadelphia Presbytery, and that their congregation be connected with the Southern or with some other Presbytery. No. 2.

Also a petition from twenty-two members of the united churches of Broad Albin and Galway, complaining of error and departure from established usages in the church, and praying that their congregation be put under the care of the Northern Presbytery. No. 3.

Also a petition from Conecocheague for disjunction of

* See Apendix.

their congregation from the Philadelphia Presbytery and to be connected with the Southern Presbytery. No. 4.

After some remarks on these papers synod adjourned to meet to-morrow at 10 A. M. in the same place.

New York, April 11, 1833.

Synod met agreeably to adjournment at 10 A. M. in the same place and was constituted with prayer by the Rev. Wm. Gibson, moderator — same members present as before. Minutes of the last meeting were read and a detailed minute of its constitution and organization of the court, corrected and approved.

Rev. Mr. M'Kee read an extract from the minutes of the Northern Presbytery, stating that the Rev. James W. Stewart now on trial before that court, had been prohibited from preaching and from the performance of any ministerial act while the trial is pending. Whereupon it was resolved that James W. Stewart being on trial, and prohibited from preaching and from the performance of ministerial acts while on trial, is disqualified from holding a seat in this synod.

The moderator announced the members of the standing committees. 1. On unfinished business, ministers, Samuel M. Willson, Wm. L. Roberts, and ruling elder, Mr. Dickey. 2. On Presbyterial reports, Rev. Dr. Willson, Rev. Mr. Roney, and Rev. R. Gibson added by vote of synod; ruling elder, Patrick Dickey. 3. On discipline, ministers, James Chrystie, James Milligan, and Moses Roney added by vote of synod; ruling elder, Samuel Wright.

A committee of three ministers was appointed by resolution of synod to prepare and publish a narrative of recent occurrences in this court, consisting of Dr. Willson, Mr. Chrystie and Mr. Gibson.

On motion, resolved that any respectable person, on application to the moderator and clerk of synod be permitted to take notes of its proceedings for publication — the synod not being responsible for such reports. Mr. Jones on application received such permission.

Synod resolved that Presbyteries be now called on for Presbyterial reports.

The Rev. John Gibson and Dr. S. B. Wylie then entered the court, and the former addressing himself to the Rev. William Gibson, (then on the floor of synod, the

moderator's chair being occupied at the time, at his request, by the Rev. Dr. Willson) attempted to read to him before the court a letter which he held in his hand. Being interrupted and told by the moderator that he could not be heard without addressing himself to the constituted officers of the synod; without making any such recognition he persisted in his attempt saying, "I come as one of yourselves." On which he was interrupted and silenced by one of the members of the court. Dr. Wylie took him by the arm saying, "that is all we want, let us go," and they then withdrew.

The Northern Presbytery was then called on for its report. The report was read, accepted and referred to the committee on Presbyterial reports.

The Western Presbytery was called on for its report. As only a part of the ministers of that Presbytery were present, it was resolved that the members of the Western Presbytery who were present be permitted to commit to writing a statement of such circumstances as come under their knowledge in the bounds of that Presbytery.

As the Southern Presbytery was not yet ready to report, the Philadelphia Presbytery was called on for a report. No ministers from that Presbytery being present it was moved that the ruling elders present have leave to communicate information from the bounds of that Presbytery. This motion after some discussion was deferred, and finally dismissed.

The Southern Presbytery reported. Their report was accepted, and except so much as relates to discipline was referred to the committee on Presbyterial reports — what relates to discipline was referred to the committee on discipline.

A plan for the distribution and arrangement of the Presbyteries in the bounds of this synod was laid on the table by the Rev. Mr. M'Kee to be afterwards called up.

Papers No. 1, 2, 3 and 4, being petitions from the churches at Conecocheague, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Galway and Broad Albin were then referred to the committee on discipline, except so much of these papers as relates to the transfer of congregations from one Presbytery to another — so much of them as relates to the transfer of congregations was referred to the committee on Presbyterial reports.

The committee appointed at the last meeting of synod in November, on the case of Dr. Wylie, charged by fama clamosa with voting at a ward election in the city of Philadelphia, and swearing allegiance to the constitution of the United States reported by their chairman, Rev. Moses Roney, — "That they had not been able to obtain evidence to which this court can have access of the fact of voting, and dismissed it from their report; but on the second item, viz: swearing allegiance to the constitution of the United States, have sufficient evidence, and therefore reported a libel against Dr. Wylie," which was laid on the table with a certificate of the clerk of Quarter Sessions in Philadelphia of Dr. Wylie's naturalization. The report was accepted.

Adjourned to meet in the same place at 4 P. M.

New York, April 11, 1833.

Synod met agreeably to adjournment, at 4 o'clock P. M. in the church in Chambers street, and was constituted with prayer by the moderator, Rev. William Gibson — same members present as before. Minutes read and approved.

Dr. Willson resigned his place as chairman of the committee, appointed to publish a narrative of recent occurrences in this synod — his resignation was accepted; and the Rev. Robert Gibson was appointed in his place.

The committee on unfinished business reported. Their report was accepted and adopted, and is as follows:

"The committee on unfinished business respectfully present the following report. That they have examined the minutes of the last meeting of synod and they find the following items of business to which they would direct the attention of synod. 1. The paper laid on the table of this court at its prorenata sessions by Mrs. M'Kinney of Albany, respecting Dr. M'Leod. On this paper the committee present for adoption the following resolution: resolved that in consequence of the death of the Rev. Dr. M'Leod, the further consideration of this paper be dismissed. 2. The appointment of the 28th March as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to be observed by all the congregations under our care. These being the only items which they find on a review of the minutes, they request to be discharged. All which is

respectfully submitted. Signed,
S. M. WILLSON, Chairman."

New York, April 11, 1833.

The ministers and delegates from vacant congregations were severally enquired at, as to the observance of a day of fasting and humiliation. It appeared to have been generally observed and the excuses of such as had omitted were sustained.

The Rev. Mr. Roberts read a statement of the condition of the church in the bounds of the Western Presbytery, which was accepted and referred to the committee on Presbyterial reports.

The committee on discipline reported — the report was accepted: it recommended the exercise of discipline in relation to those ministers who were under libel before this court. The following resolution was then carried. Resolved that the Rev. Dr. S. B. Wylie, Dr. G. M'Master, Rev. S. W. Crawford, Rev. Wm. Willson, and Rev. J. M'Master be cited to appear before this court and answer to the libel that has been served on them, and for their contempt of this court, manifested by their tumultuous and disorderly departure from this house on yesterday, and continued by the manner in which one of their number appeared this day. The assistant clerk was appointed to serve the citation.

Resolved that the report of the committee on Dr. Wylie be adopted and referred to the committee on discipline. The report of the committee on discipline was then recommitted. Adjourned to meet to-morrow 10 A. M. same place.

New York, April 12, 1833.

Eastern Sub-Synod met agreeably to adjournment in the church in Chambers street at 10 A. M. and was constituted with prayer by the moderator, the Rev. William Gibson. Same members present as before, except Wm. Acheson, Mr. Spence, and A. M'Fadden, who shortly appeared and took their seats.

The assistant clerk reported that he had served the citations according to his appointment.

Papers were called for.

Dr. Willson gave notice of his purpose to lay on the table of synod, the printed numbers of the Albany Quarterly. Mr. Chrystie gave notice of his intention to offer

a resolution recommending it to the patronage of the church members, and to our courts as a suitable vehicle for the publication of our minutes.

Mr. M'Kee called up his proposal for the distribution and arrangement of the several Presbyteries, under the jurisdiction of this synod, which was then referred to the committee on Presbyterial reports. An application to synod made by the Rev. Wm. L. Roberts and Rev. J. Fisher to be disjoined from the Western Presbytery and constituted a distinct Presbytery, was also referred to the committee on Presbyterial reports.

The committee on discipline presented an enlarged report, which was accepted. It embraced several distinct items. 1. A preamble and resolutions respecting the ministers and elders, now under libel before this court, and a resolution respecting Dr. S. B. Wylie's case for having sworn allegiance to the United States Constitution. The present consideration of these was deferred. 2. A preamble and resolution respecting the American Christian Expositor founded on the Presbyterial report of the Southern Presbytery, which preamble and resolution was amended and adopted as follows:

"In that report (the Presbyterial report of the Southern Presbytery) your committee find a statement of the proceedings of that Presbytery, expressing by certain resolutions in October last, their disapprobation of the course pursued by the American Christian Expositor, and of the protest of Andrew Gifford against said resolutions. Believing that the sanction of our General Synod to that publication has terminated with the decease of its Editor, the Rev. Dr. M'Leod, your committee do not conceive it necessary to take any other measures than to recommend the following resolution:" — "Resolved that the protest and appeal of Andrew Gifford not being pursued before this court be deemed null and void."

"3d item of report by the committee of discipline, consisted of a preamble and resolutions on the conduct of certain elders in the Chambers street congregation and the Philadelphia Presbytery issuing in the installation of Rev. J. N. M'Leod in Chambers street. This preamble and the resolutions, after several amendments, were adopted as follows:

"In the same Presbyterial report of the Southern Pres-

bytery, your committee find a statement of the proceedings of certain members of the session of the church in Chambers street, viz: David Clark, James Nelson, Joseph M'Kee, Robert Pattison and Andrew Gifford acting as elders of that church but without right, as appears, to a seat in session, in attempting to withdraw from the jurisdiction of that Presbytery and placing themselves under that of the Philadelphia Presbytery, after having in a violent and disorderly manner expelled from the communion of the church several elders and other officers of the church with a majority of the private members, for not owning the ministrations of the Rev. J. N. M'Leod suspended by this court; and the Philadelphia Presbytery proceeding to the installation of Mr. M'Leod over that congregation. It appears also before your committee, that the following ruling elders, viz: Wm. Acheson, Wm. Cowan and H. Galbraith, together with several deacons and a great majority of the members of that church, retained their adherence to the Southern Presbytery.—While your committee leave to this synod to determine the censure incurred by the members of the Philadelphia Presbytery and others associated with them in these proceedings, they recommend the adoption of the following resolutions."

"1. *Resolved*, That this court considers the act of those elders of the church in Chambers street, in attempting to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the Southern Presbytery as totally irregular and invalid, and the act of the Philadelphia Presbytery in receiving them as an unlawful assumption of power."

"2. *Resolved*, That this court hereby declares its decided disapprobation of the proceedings of Philadelphia Presbytery in violently and surreptitiously encroaching on the bounds of the Southern Presbytery, in attempting to take from them one of their congregations, and install in violation of all order a suspended minister of the gospel, over an unwilling people withthe force of the officers of the city police."

"3. *Resolved*, That this synod hereby confirms and approves of the act of the Southern Presbytery in restoring to office and church privileges the officers and members of the church under censure by the session of Chambers street, and their other proceedings in the case."

"4. *Resolved*, That this synod declares the proceedings of the Philadelphia Presbytery, in taking under their jurisdiction the Chambers street congregation, and subsequently installing over that congregation the Rev. J. N. M'Leod, wholly irregular and invalid."

The consideration of the remainder of the report of the committee on discipline was deferred.

Resolved, That a third citation be served on Dr. S. B. Wylie, Dr. G. M'Master, Rev. S. W. Crawford, Rev. Wm. Willson and Rev. J. M'Master, to appear before this court and answer to the libel that has been preferred against them and for contempt of this court, this day at 4 P. M. The moderator appointed Messrs. Houston and Dickey to serve the citations.

Resolved, That Messrs. Walkingshaw and M'Kinney, licentiates under the care of this synod be referred to the committee on Presbyterial reports for the distribution of their time.

Synod adjourned to meet in the same place at 4 P. M.

New York, April 12, 1833.

Synod met agreeably to adjournment at 4 P. M. and was constituted with prayer by the moderator, Rev. W. Gibson. Same members present as before.

Messrs. Houston and Dickey reported that they had served the citations.

The deferred part of the report of the committee on discipline was taken up and considered: the synod was employed on that part of the report which relates to the ministers and elders under a libel.

The preamble and first resolution after being amended, and after a protracted discussion were successively adopted, and are as follows:

New York, April 12, 1833.

"The committee on discipline sorely grieved that so many of our members have lately been trying to build again the things which they and we had unitedly gone far to destroy in the arena of argument, in the conscience of God's covenant people, and in the rational conviction of many on-lookers, by which they have lamentably become transgressors. It has also become evident that these men are determined to resist all faithful endeavors by this court to reclaim them. Before us we have ample testimony that Dr. Samuel B. Wylie, Dr. Gilbert M'Master,

Samuel W. Crawford, John N. M'Leod, John M'Master and William Willson, teaching elders; and Samuel Bell, David Clark, Thomas Cummings, William Cunningham and Charles M'Cleu, ruling elders, did in utter contempt of our court and disrespect of our earnest efforts to prevent the same, rebelliously publish a paper called "An Original Draft of a Pastoral Address," calculated to distract our congregations, mar their edification, and destroy their confidence in those ministers who hold fast the rule of their former attainments — and whereas these men, viz: the clerical part of them did when cited to appear before us, seek to distract this court, to nullify our doings in the prorenata sessions of synod, and to carry every thing their own way by subtile fraud or sheer violence. And as if all this had been too little, when we were yesterday comfortably proceeding in the transaction of our business the dissenting brethren interrupted us by sending one of their number, viz: Dr. S. B. Wylie, associated with another individual, with a paper or papers which they seemed determined to read without recognizing the proper officers of the court — and whereas from all these acts jointly and severally it is evident that we can no longer walk with these men in the fellowship of the gospel, therefore,"

"*Resolved*, That the Rev. Dr. Samuel B. Wylie, Dr. Gilbert M'Master, Rev. Samuel W. Crawford, Rev. John M'Master, and Rev. William Willson, having been found guilty by this court. 1. Of following divisive courses. 2. Contempt of the authority of synod. 3. Error in doctrine. 4. Abandonment of the testimony of the church, and 5. Slandering synod and its members — be and hereby are suspended from the exercise of the office of the holy ministry and from the privileges of the church."*

The above preamble was adopted. Before voting on the resolution prayer was offered by the Rev. Dr. J. R. Willson.

The Rev. R. Gibson, the only negative vote on the resolution, requested and had leave that his reasons of dissent be recorded on the minutes of synod.

Synod adjourned to meet to-morrow at 10 A. M. same place.

* For the libel in full, see Albany Quarterly No. V. and appendix to a sermon entitled Truth, by the Rev. S. M. Willson.

New York, April 13, 1833.

Synod met agreeably to adjournment at 10 A. M. in the church in Chambers street, was constituted with prayer by Rev. William Gibson, moderator. Same members present as before. Minutes read and approved.

Rev. R. Gibson laid on the table his reasons of vote mentioned last evening to be recorded on minutes of synod.*

The report of the committee on discipline was then taken up and that part relating to the petitions from Chambersburgh, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and from Galway and Broad Albin was considered. After several proposed amendments and considerable discussion it was deferred.

The committee on Presbyterial reports reported by their chairman, the Rev. Dr. Willson. It was accepted, and with some amendments, after being considered paragraph by paragraph was all adopted except the last resolution, the consideration of which was interrupted by the adjournmnt of synod to meet in the same place at 4 P. M. this day.

New York, April 13, 1833.

Synod met agreeably to adjournment in the church in Chambers street at 4 P. M. and was constituted with prayer by the Rev. W. Gibson, moderator.†

The elder from Baltimore had leave at his own suggestion to withdraw the petition from certain members in the congregation at Baltimore.

Report of the committee on discipline was then again taken up. The resolution relating to the ruling elders under libel was adopted, by which the case of Messrs. Samuel Bell, David Clark, Thomas Cummings, William Cunningham and Charles M'Cleu was referred to the cognizance of the sessions, or in case of their neglect, to the Presbyteries to which they respectively belong: as follows. "In reference to the ruling elders, resolved that they be referred to the cognizance of the inferior judicatories to which they shall belong at the close of our pre-

* Mr. Gibson voted in the affirmative, on the question of finding the accused guilty. He thought they merited suspension, but wished the question as to the censure to be referred to General Synod.

† Absent at the call of the roll, Dr. Willson, Mr. Millegan and Mr. Gibson, who came in soon after.

sent sessions." The moderator, in answer to an enquiry by a member of the court, decided that the elders thus referred had no power to act in their respective sessions, while the libel is pending. Further consideration of this report deferred.

Resumed the report of committee on Presbyterial reports which had been deferred to consider the previous business. The concluding resolution in that report was then adopted, and Dr. Willson, Mr. Chrystie, ministers, and William Henry, ruling elder of Philadelphia, appointed on the committee. The whole report as amended and completed, was then adopted and is as follows:

"Report of the committee on Presbyterial reports. Your committee having attended to the papers referred to them, perceive with regret that there is considerable distraction in a few congregations. This has arisen from attempts made to lead away our people from the testimony of Jesus. Such attempts are resisted by the faithful. No small violence in language, and in one case, that of Chambers street congregation, in acts, has been resorted to by those who oppose the truth. There is also reason to mourn that errors, heresies and immoralities are extensively prevalent in the land, and we have ground to believe are on the increase."

"On the other hand, the greater number of our congregations are living in peace and growing in numbers, and we trust in holiness, and striving together for the faith of the gospel. We have also numerous growing vacancies, many of which are now ripe for settlement and others that need cultivation only to become, with the blessing of God, flourishing congregations."

"By the act of suspension passed yesterday on some ministers, these congregations are become vacant: two within the bounds of the Western Presbytery, and one in the bounds of the Philadelphia Presbytery."

"In consideration of these facts your committee recommend the passage of the following resolutions."

"1. That when application is made to them by the people, the Southern Presbytery send supplies to the vacancies within the bounds of what has been known by the name of the Philadelphia Presbytery — and that the Northern Presbytery furnish such aid as may be in their

power to the vacancies of the Western Presbytery in their neighborhood."

"2. That Mr. Samuel M'Kinney, a licentiate, be committed to the care of the Southern Presbytery, and that Mr. Hugh Walkingshaw spend six weeks under the Northern, and the remainder of the time until the meeting of General Synod under the direction of the Southern Presbytery."

"3. That two ministers and a ruling elder be appointed a commission of Synod to repair to the city of Baltimore, and settle the difficulties existing in the congregation there: that Dr. J. R. Willson, Rev. James Chrystie and Wm. Henry of Philadelphia, be that committee. All which is respectfully submitted. Signed,

JAMES R. WILLSON, Chairman."

New York, April 13, 1833.

Dr. Willson having laid on the table of synod four numbers of the Albany Quarterly, the following resolutions were adopted.

Resolved, 1. That the Eastern Sub-Synod hereby recommends to all the members of the church under its care, the Albany Quarterly as a publication, which from its past and present character, is calculated to promote the principles of the reformation and extend useful intelligence. 2. That it be and hereby is adopted by this court as the medium of publishing such of its acts and proceedings as may be deemed necessary for the information of the church: and that it be respectfully recommended for the same purpose to the superior and to our inferior courts.

A committee of two ministers, viz: Mr. Roney and Mr. R. Gibson and one ruling elder, Mr. M'Murray, was appointed to prepare a synodical report from this synod to the General Synod.

Adjourned to meet on Monday at 10 A. M. in the 2d Reformed Presbyterian church in this city.

New York, April 15, 1833.

The Eastern Sub-Synod met at the church in Sixth street, agreeably to adjournment at 10 A. M. and was constituted with prayer by the moderator, the Rev. W. Gibson. Same members present as before. Minutes were read and approved.

Mr. William Acheson, ruling elder, was added to the commission appointed to go to the Baltimore congregation.

A NARRATIVE

OF

RECENT OCCURRENCES

WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF THE

EASTERN SUBORDINATE SYNOD

OF THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

NEW YORK:
PRINTED BY G. A. C. VAN BEUREN,
No. 245 Spring street.

1834.

PREFACE.

When introducing another pamphlet to the attention of Reformed Presbyterians, it may be necessary to offer a brief explanation. Many and gross misstatements have been made by a faction adhering to Dr. Wylie. The character and actions of Reformed Presbyterians were attacked in spurious pamphlets called minutes, other publications, and in verbal statements of slanderous character. The Eastern Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church deemed it necessary to appoint a committee to draw up and publish a statement of facts, including argument in justification of the course adopted by said synod in relation to their brethren who had abandoned the church courts, and, to some extent, the principles and practices of Reformed Presbyterians. I was appointed chairman of that committee. A document was prepared, which was afterwards read before the Eastern Subordinate Synod in Philadelphia. After some amendments, the document was approved as a correct statement of the matters that had transpired in the eastern section of the church.

In the mean time, a new occurrence in Philadelphia, viz. the secession of a party in connection with Dr. Wylie and other suspended ministers, and the organization of a *new court*, calling itself the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church, required that the narrative should be continued so as to include the actual separation of Dr. Wylie and his party, and to display the true reasons of that separation, as also to justify the church in the course adopted in defence of her avowed principles and usages.

The general synod appointed a committee for this purpose, hoping that a report could have been made out during its session; but this was found to be impracticable. The synod rose without receiving the report.

The Eastern Subordinate Synod returned to the chairman of its committee the document he had read, with liberty to continue the narrative with such remarks as he might think necessary; but all to be executed *on his own personal responsibility*. On that responsibility it now appears, he holding himself accountable to the church courts for every statement, and every argument.

If it shall be approved by his brethren, be acceptable to the church, and serve any valuable end in defending the truth, and removing the reproach of a disaffected party, he will rejoice. If otherwise, he will only say, that such were the objects he hoped to have accomplished by the undertaking, which is far from being a pleasant task. According to the best of his judgment, he has stated nothing but fact. A full investigation of the minutes of the Wylie synod was not contemplated. This would have required a *book* instead of a

pamphlet—besides, he has been happily anticipated by two brethren, who have published some judicious strictures upon the Eleventh-street minutes.

The general plan adopted has been—

1. To furnish an abstract of the proceedings of all parties concerned in the late unhappy controversy.

2. A defence of the legality of the *pro-re-nata* sessions of synod, the April sessions of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, and the general synod which met in Cherry-street, Philadelphia.

3. A contrast between the sentiments of the followers of Dr. Wylie and the Reformed Presbyterian church.

4. A statement and refutation of the principal arguments employed by Dr. Wylie's party, both against the principles and practices of the church, and against their brethren adhering to the laws and usages of said church.

To the above plan he perceives that he has not strictly adhered—principally, because there were so many heterogeneous documents to refute, in which there seems to be a blending of articles the most dissimilar, and partly because it was written in scraps, in the midst of much interruption, and a multitude of other duties. Such as it is, it is offered to Reformed Presbyterians as an effort of one of her sons, to sustain the judicatories of the Lord's house, and to defend those truths that have been handed down by pious parents to their children from age to age; and in defence of which it may yet be necessary for their successors to seal their testimony with their blood.

New York, January 24, 1834.

NARRATIVE, &C.

A Narrative of Recent Occurrences within the bounds of the Eastern Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

By act of our superior, or general synod, met in the city of Philadelphia, August, 1830, two subordinate synods, called the Eastern and Western, were to be constituted at as early a period as convenient. In compliance with this order, the members of the different presbyteries east of the Alleghany mountains met, by mutual agreement, in the city of New York, in the month of April, 1832, to constitute the Eastern Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church. The synod was constituted by the Rev. William Gibson, the oldest minister belonging to our church in the United States, on the 24th of April, 1832.

On the 25th, or second day of the session, Dr. Wylie moved that "a committee be appointed to draft a pastoral address to the people under our charge, and to report during the present session of the synod." According to the uniform usage, he that made the motion was appointed chairman of the committee. On the following day the committee reported a draft of a pastoral letter, part of which was adopted, and part rejected. This letter underwent a severe scrutiny. The fourth and fifth paragraphs were rejected by synod, both on account of the sentiments being contrary to our standards, and the abusive language and evil insinuations contained therein. No sooner had synod adjourned, than the minority, consisting of seven ministers and six ruling elders, called a meeting to make arrangements for publishing the *whole document*, with *explanatory notes*, and thus throw it out among the people contrary to the act of synod *condemning* both *matter* and *manner* of sections fourth and fifth. The explanatory notes were still more offensive, both as teaching doctrines contrary to the standards, and abusing personal character. It would be useless to furnish extracts from this perverse and abusive document. It is well known in the Reformed Presbyterian church, for it has been industriously circulated through every section thereof. The question here is not whether our standards *are correct*; nor whether the pastoral letter *taught doctrines contrary to the standards*. It is well known that a civil judge would not permit attorneys to plead that the law was an unjust one, therefore the client shall not be subjected to the penalty. He would say, clear your client according to the existing law under which I officiate, or abandon the cause. Ex post facto law cannot be made to suit you and your client. In like manner, all judicial proceedings in the church proceed on the ground of existing law.

It is equally evident that the question, in this stage of the narrative, is not whether the pastoral letter is in opposition to the standards. The competent authority (the synod) said it was. No harm could result in submitting to synod until the meeting of our superior judicatory. Besides, it was the duty of the minority to submit. If not, then all Presbyterian order is at an end. The question, on Presbyterial principles, is never how large is the majority; but, is there a majority? In a case of violating the conscience, and compulsion to immoral acts, the case and duty are plain—protest and appeal, or *secede*.

In consequence of the above pastoral letter and notes, published and circulated in defiance of the authority of synod, several ministers at first, and afterward two presbyteries, requested the moderator to call a *pro-re-nata* meeting of the synod, to take order in the case. The only reason of the Presbyteries calling upon the moderator for a pro-re-nata, was, because the moderator was not certain that he would be legally justified in calling it without such request of presbyteries. No objection, therefore, can lie against the call upon the moderator, as at least four ministers personally requested him to call the meeting, and afterward, two presbyteries. It has never been disputed, by any, that his summons was in due form, forwarded in due season, and actually received by all the ministers.

At the call of the moderator, twenty members appeared and took their seats. He then constituted the synod by prayer—laid before synod the reasons of the call, and the business to be transacted. He was sustained by the court. This meeting was held in November, 1832. Eight ministers sent forward written protests against holding the meeting, six of whom were implicated in the offensive conduct requiring the interference of Synod. Considering that they should have been forward to enter their protests; and also, that as their conduct was to be the subject of judicial cognizance, and that every offender would be disposed to disband a court that might find him guilty of misdemeanor, the members of the court did not see proper to return to their homes without attending to the business for which they were called together. The protests were rejected as *disorderly*, and some of them *insulting*.

Young Mr. McLeod, the clerk, was called upon to take his place, which he refused, calling them "an irregular, disorderly assembly of ecclesiastics." He was then called upon for the minutes of the preceding synod, which he also refused in the *same tone of modesty and diffidence*, as that in which he refused to take his seat. The reasons of requiring the minutes must be obvious to every unprejudiced mind. They would have been of use in *ascertaining the regular members of the court*—and they were necessarily and intimately connected with the business of synod, which grew out of an express violation of a deed of synod at its previous sessions. The design was not to enter upon the regular business of synod; but the *extraordinary* and *de novo business* for which the synod was called. As they met for extraordinary business, and matters arising de novo, they transacted *no other business*. The suspension of Mr. J. N. McLeod was of this character. It grew necessarily out of the *former act of rebellion*, concerning which the synod had met "to take order." He was one of *the rebels*, and as such was amenable to the court. Instead of submitting, or at least yielding up the documents of synod, he added repeated

and impertinent *insult* to *injury*. Every court has a right to protect itself, and vindicate its own honor when impudently insulted by one of its own members. Much has been said about "sending him down to his own presbytery, as his peers, to take order in his case, that if they thought proper they might censure him;" which would be little wiser than for the chancellor of New York, who, if insulted by a member of the bar, must pocket the insult, and send him down to an alderman, or petty justice of the peace, to punish for an insult given to a superior officer and a superior court! It will be long before civil officers will be guilty of such weakness and folly! Besides, why send him to an inferior tribunal? It was not as a member of the western presbytery he had offended; but as a member of the eastern subordinate synod. There might, possibly, have been some common sense in referring him to a superior court, (the general synod,) but not a shadow of sense in sending him down to the inferior, in a case of insult. Civil officers, when insulted in court, punish on the spot, without even the form of trial. They order such an offender into immediate custody. And this is based upon the principle that every court has a right to protect itself from abuse.

After three regular citations, all of which were treated with contempt, Mr. McLeod was suspended from the exercise of his ministry. Though the formal ground of Mr. J. N. McLeod's suspension was the *disobedience* and *insult*, yet it will be remembered that he was *an original offender*, and that the exclusive object he must have had in view was to prevent an investigation of his own and his brethren's rebellion against synod, and supposed heresy in the original draft.

At the same meeting of *pro-re-nata*, the "original draft of a pastoral letter" was investigated. A libel was founded thereon against those who signed it. The counts in the libel were five: 1. Following divisive courses—2. Contempt of the authority of synod—3. Error in doctrine—4. Abandonment of the testimony of the church—and 5. Slandering synod and its members.

The clerk was instructed to send a copy of the libel to each of the offenders, together with a citation to each to appear before the bar of synod on the 9th of April, 1832, to answer to the charges contained in the libel. This citation was either regularly served by suitable persons employed by the clerk, or, where such could not be obtained, forwarded by mail to the proper post-offices, in the vicinity of such person.

During the intervening time between the pro-re-nata session of synod and the April meeting, several actions, of no ordinary character, occurred in the bounds of the synod. To some of these occurrences it is necessary to refer, most of which will be found given at large in a pamphlet published by three ministers belonging to the southern presbytery, entitled "Statement of some recent transactions in the bounds of the Southern Reformed Presbytery," and which we know to be true, and for the truth of which we who have signed it pledge ourselves.

On the Sabbath subsequent to young Mr. McLeod's suspension, his father introduced him to the Chambers-street pulpit. A considerable part of the congregation rose up, and silently withdrew from the church as soon as the exercises commenced, believing that they would be censurable for waiting on and countenancing the ministrations of a suspended minister. The following

Sabbath was the preparation for the communion in said church. Mr. McLeod again officiated, though suspended; and in the mean time presided as moderator in almost all the meetings of session. Dr. McMaster occupied the chair at the meeting of session previous to the communion, when two elders and two deacons, and their adherents, were suspended from privileges at the approaching communion. Their only offence was retiring from the ministry of Mr. J. N. McLeod. A libel was afterward served upon the two elders and the deacons, but it was not even tried. The adherents were excluded from the societies, and other privileges, *without charge*, or *citation*, or *trial*. Mr. McLeod took a principal part in conducting the sacrament, in company with Dr. McMaster and Mr. Crawford, both under libel. Shortly after the elders and deacons were brought up for trial on the libel. They refused to be tried by a man under suspension, (J. N. McLeod) and solicited their pastor to occupy the seat himself as moderator. With this he would not comply. They were told to withdraw, and after a short consultation of the session, were recalled to hear their sentence. Dr. McLeod himself pronounced the sentence, which was extraordinary in matter and manner. The judgment of the session had been, that the elders, deacons, and their adherents should have their names stricken from the rolls as officers and members; but Dr. McLeod, "*in the name of the living God, and the blessed Trinity,*" expelled them from the communion of the church!! This censure embraced all the adherents of the four under libel, and which proved, in less than a week, to be upwards of one hundred and forty persons, besides their families—and all this was done without even a notification of any offence committed, any citation to appear before session, or any means employed to reclaim them, if they had been acting wrong. There can be but two reasons for this cruel, tyrannical, unpresbyterial, and unprecedented measure. These are: first, to be avenged on synod for suspending Mr. McLeod, by excluding their adherents from the fellowship of the church —second, to clear the way for an introduction of Mr. J. N. McLeod as collegiate pastor in Chambers-street. The former is highly *probable;* the latter is *certain.* Future facts demonstrate this.

The Philadelphia session and consistory passed *acts*, declaring *the invalidity* of the synod's act of suspension, in relation to Mr. McLeod. The Philadelphia presbytery, most of whom were themselves under libel, did the same thing. The western presbytery, in absence of the only two regular ministers belonging to it, did also the same. Were it not for the sacred character of the church of God, and of the government which he has established in his church, the above actions would appear altogether ludicrous, and could excite little more than pity to see men arraying themselves against their superiors, and passing acts and resolutions that were perfectly harmless, because inefficient. When viewed, however, as wilful and perverse acts of rebellion against the authority of Christ's house, the conduct assumes a different aspect. The conduct is identified with the nullifying acts of South Carolina, which will only bring *disgrace*, or (if madness prevail) ruin upon themselves. Forsooth! the consistory of Philadelphia, or a faction of ministers under libel, in the name of Presbyteries, issuing *their Bulls* against the Eastern Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church!!

We have said that upwards of *one hundred and forty* members of the

Chambers-street church were cut off from the communion of said church, without charge, citation, expostulation, or trial, by Dr. McLeod, "*in the name of the living God and the blessed Trinity.*" This cruel, tyrannical, and unholy act, constrained two ministers belonging to the southern presbytery, in whose bounds the deed was transacted, to call upon Mr. Roney, the moderator of the southern presbytery, requesting him to call an early meeting of the presbytery. The injured persons had appealed from the session; given in their remonstrances to the session, which were disregarded; and then applied to the two ministers above referred to, to petition the moderator for an early meeting. The moderator, the Rev. Mr. Roney, complied, and issued the following summons, in which was stated the business to come before the court. The following is a copy of his circular addressed to each of the members:

"SIR,

"At the request of two members, (Rev. Messrs. Chrystie and R. Gibson,) I hereby call a meeting *pro-re-nata*, of the southern presbytery of the eastern sub-synod, to convene in the Reformed Presbyterian church, Sixth-street, New York, on the 16th January, 1833, at 10 o'clock A. M., at which time and place you are directed to appear with a ruling elder from your session, to take order on the following items of business, thought to require the early attention of presbytery, viz.

"1. The disorderly conduct of the Rev. Dr. McLeod, in introducing to his pulpit, and to the administration of a sealing ordinance, John N. McLeod, while suspended from the exercise of the holy ministry.

"2. The conduct of sundry members of the session of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Chambers-street, New York, in sanctioning the aforesaid disorderly conduct, by recognizing the right of the said John N. McLeod, to officiate ministerially when introduced as aforesaid.

"3. A protest and appeal by sundry members of the session aforementioned against the introduction to the moderator's chair in the said session, John N. McLeod, and his being permitted to occupy it while suspended from the exercise of his office.

"4. The conduct of the said session in unnecessarily and unjustly finding a libel against Messrs. Wm. Cowan, Hugh Galbraith, Andrew Bowden and James Thompson, respectively.

"5. The conduct of said session in cutting off from the exercise of office, and from membership in the congregation to which they belong, the aforementioned Wm. Cowan, Hugh Galbraith, A. Bowden and J. Thompson.

"6. The deciding upon a question of church order arising out of the exercise of official power by Messrs. Andrew Gifford, John Tait and Moses Spiers, in the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Chambers-street, New York.

"7. Business necessarily connected with any of the preceding items, or that may arise *de novo* from proceedings thereon.

MOSES RONEY, *Moderator.*

Newburgh, Dec. 29, 1832."

On the 16th of January, 1833, the members appeared, the court was constituted, and the call of the moderator was sustained.

The court proceeded to the business for which the members had convened. The first document laid on the table of presbytery was a letter from Dr. McLeod, stating that he was no longer under the jurisdiction of the southern presbytery, but had attached himself to that of Philadelphia, and remonstrating against any interference relative to him or his congregation.

To explain this singular document it is necessary to observe that no sooner was the summons of the moderator issued, and a copy in the hands of Dr. McLeod, and he thereby became acquainted with the business coming before the court, than the project was conceived of transferring the Chambers-street congregation, its pastor, and Rev J. N. McLeod, (belonging to the western presbytery,) into the presbytery of Philadelphia, and thus break up a relation established by the synod, and that without consulting the congregation, or the presbytery to which it belonged. A petition was forthwith framed, and carried around among those thought to be favorable to young Mr. McLeod, to be laid before the presbytery *under whose care* they were, to grant a moderation and settlement of a *co-pastor* in the Chambers-street congregation. *At that time they had not been received by the Philadelphia presbytery*, and most were *entirely ignorant of any design of applying for such a thing*. It was viewed as *an application* (not of the congregation as such, but of those who chose to sign the petition,) *to the southern presbytery, to which they belonged*. This *trick* wrought as well as could be expected, and many were deceived thereby, even intelligent members of the church. The petition, thus *fraudulently* got up, and signed, was sent on to the Philadelphia presbytery, by Elder David Clark, of New York. Whether the Philadelphia presbytery knew the intrigue practised in the case, we know not. They did know that a very large number of the congregation had been suspended, because they would not wait upon the ministrations of Mr. McLeod, while under suspension, and that the southern presbytery was about to meet in a few days to take order in the case. They also did know that *synod had fixed the boundaries of the presbyteries*, and that presbyteries had neither *right* nor *power* to alter them. The business was all in a state of readiness. Mr. J. N. McLeod had hastily obtained his dismission from the western presbytery, and connected himself with that of Philadelphia. Without much ceremony, and in violation of presbyterial order, the transfer was effected—the act of general synod set aside—and the Chambers-street congregation was no longer considered in connection with the southern presbytery. A few designing spirits had done all the work for them, without their *consent*, or even *knowledge!* To keep dark was all important to the success of the scheme.

A committee of the Philadelphia presbytery was hastened with all speed to New York, to effect the settlement. The petition was laid before the Philadelphia presbytery on the 10th of January—same day the committee was appointed—John N. McLeod was received as a member. The king's business required haste, and it was an important ecclesiastical work they had to perform. On the *morning of the 13th*, (Sabbath day,) *they arrived in time for church*, and on the 14th the call was moderated, and Mr. J. N. McLeod installed in the Chambers-street congregation, in spite of the utmost efforts of the congregation, and an injunction of the vice-chancellor of New York, and all this under the staves of the city marshalls! Thus, in less than three days,

this *orderly* and *modest* procedure was completed, in opposition to both civil and ecclesiastical authority. We might submit the question to any intelligent Presbyterian on earth, whether this transaction was conducted according to *any known principles and usages in the Presbyterian church.*

Is it according to *law and usage* for a session to *suspend one hundred and forty persons* and their families from the fellowship of the church, *without libel, citation*, or *forms of trial*, and in *their absence?* For a session, without consulting a congregation, to drag them unceremoniously out of their own presbytery into another? To get up a petition *secretly*, and circulating it among the people, make them believe it is to be presented to their own presbytery, and then carry it into another? For a presbytery to break through the boundaries of presbyteries established by synod, and that too for the purpose of preventing such presbyteries from settling their own affairs, and investigating the misconduct and cruelty of their own sessions? For a presbytery to moderate a call on *seventeen hours' notice, twelve of which was the night of the Sabbath*—and both moderate the call, and install a minister, in not more than *four hours* from the commencement of the moderation till the final instalment? To *force* a man upon *a large majority* of the people worshipping in, and supporting the church, by the aid of *city marshalls?* To force upon a congregation a man under suspension by a superior court, and accomplish the whole business in *less* than *three days*, except we take into account *the Sabbath travelling?* Will any Presbyterian say that this was according to law and usage? It is thought that every well informed member of the church will say *no.*

The southern presbytery proceeded, notwithstanding the notice from Dr. McLeod, and expressed their disapprobation of the Doctor's conduct, as *disorderly* and *illegal*, as well as that of the Philadelphia presbytery—*reprobated* both the employment of Mr. McLeod, while under suspension, and the *violent, unpresbyterial*, and *artful* settlement of Mr. McLeod over the congregation, and referred the whole business to the Eastern Subordinate Synod, to meet in April, 1833.

The following are the resolutions adopted by the presbytery.

"Resolved 1st. that no superior court having disjoined Dr. McLeod and his congregation from this presbytery, they are still under its jurisdiction and subject to its authority.

"2nd. That the presbytery view with extreme disapprobation, the whole conduct of the Rev. Dr. McLeod and the elders, deacons and others, who have acted with him in this transaction, as constituting a violent and disgraceful outrage on church order, contempt for ecclesiastical authority, and disregard of the rights of church members.

"3d. That presbytery, content for the present with this expression of their sentiments, refer the proceedings adverted to in Dr. McLeod's letter to the Eastern Subordinate Synod, at its stated meeting in April, to take such order as the conduct of the Philadelphia presbytery and of Dr. McLeod in the case, may require."

The other items referred to in the call of the moderator came up in the form of protests and appeals, remonstrances and petitions—on all of which testimony was taken upon oath. Witnesses were called, both of those who

were adherents to Dr. McLeod and his son, and those who were not. The papers and testimony were given into the hands of a committee to report thereon. The report was adopted, and is as follows:

"The committee to whom were referred the several papers and accompanying documents, and evidence thereon, respectfully report:

"It appears from an examination of these papers, and the transactions stated in them, that the following circumstances, required the peculiar and deliberate attention of the court, by whom we have been appointed—

"1. That the Rev. John N. McLeod, after having been in a manner the most public and capable of being known to all the parties immediately concerned, suspended from the exercise of the office of the holy ministry, by the Eastern Subordinate Synod, at its *pro-re-nata* meeting, in this city, in November last, was by the pastor of the Chambers-street congregation, allowed to preside as moderator of the session on several occasions, to preach in his pulpit, and assist in the sacrament of the Lord's supper in that congregation.

"2. That a considerable number of the members of that congregation, including elders, deacons, and private members, submitting to the act of the sub-synod suspending the Rev. J. N. McLeod, testified their disapprobation of the conduct of the pastor of the congregation, and the elders, deacons, and others, aforesaid, with him, in recognizing the Rev. J. N. McLeod, by either as church officers, protesting against his officiating, or as members, by withdrawing from the public worship as administered by him, while under suspension.

"3. That these elders, viz. William Acheson, Hugh Galbraith, and William Cowan, together with their adherents, were, on the Friday preceding the communion, by act of the session, expelled the societies, for having thus testified their disapprobation of the Rev. J. N. McLeod officiating in the session and in the public worship of God, while under suspension. This act included besides the elders named, three deacons, viz. A. Bowden, John Culbert, James Thompson, and a large number, amounting, as in the event has appeared, to a majority of the whole congregation in full communion.

"4. That four of the elders and deacons of that congregation, were libelled and cited before session, on December 26, 1832, on vexatious and unfounded charges, and without the form of a trial, while session was unlawfully constituted by a suspended minister of the gospel, and in a manner marked by evident irregularity and departure from the forms usually observed in the discipline of God's house, had their names struck from the rolls as officers and members of the congregation, and were themselves cut off from the fellowship of the church. The names of these elders and deacons, are Hugh Galbraith, William Cowan, James Thompson, and Andrew Bowden, the first two ruling elders, and the last two, deacons.

"5. That these transactions were accompanied by other acts of a disorderly nature, such as the exclusion of members from fellowship meetings, without the authority of any known deed of session, or form of trial proceeding, and the admission of William C. Beattie to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, while debarred from church privileges by deed of the presbytery, at its session in Newburgh.

"All these facts, your committee find fully substantiated by the various

evidence contained in your minutes, taken in the long and laborious investigation which was on yesterday closed in your court.

"They therefore recommend to your adoption, the following resolutions, as measures unavoidably imposed upon presbytery, in the extraordinary circumstances produced by complicated irregularity, disorder, and violence—and in which, although your committee deem it proper to avoid any immediate proceedings, or adopting any acts of censure, which the conduct of the offending parties might justify, they have recommended what justice and imperative duty appear to require, in extending redress to the oppressed and injured members of that congregation, both officers and private members.

"Resolved, 1. That this presbytery, bound as all inferior courts are, to submit to the act of the eastern sub-synod, suspending the Rev. John N. McLeod from the exercise of the office of the holy ministry, till that act be removed by a superior court, are bound to maintain the authority of that court in the inferior judicatories, subject to their jurisdiction.

"2. That they therefore do reverse, and hereby declare reversed, all decisions and acts of the minister and elders of the Chambers-street congregation removing from office, or excluding from communion, for bearing testimony against, and refusal to acknowledge the ministry of John N. McLeod, while under suspension, the following elders and other members of that congregation, viz. Hugh Galbraith, William Acheson, and William Cowan, ruling elders, together with their adherents, among whom are John Culbert, deacon, and all the private members who were excluded from the communion by session, on Friday the 1st of December, before the last sacrament in that church—also Andrew Bowden and James Thompson, deacons, who, together with the aforesaid H. Galbraith and William Cowan, ruling elders, were, although the libel against them before session related to other matters, by session on the 26th of December, 1832, for the same reasons cut off from church membership, and had their names stricken from the rolls. The presbytery by this act, restoring said elders and deacons to the full exercise of their respective offices in said congregation, and all the power thereof as possessed and exercised before their exclusion or removal by the session; and all the members aforementioned to the full enjoyment of their privileges, as members in full communion and regular standing in the church, as they were before the act of exclusion herein referred to, or any act immediately arising out of their refusal to acknowledge the ministry of John N. McLeod while under suspension.

"3. That the presbytery, deeply sympathizing with these officers and members of the Reformed Presbyterian church, who have been wronged by the oppressive act from which we have now relieved them, do earnestly recommend to them while in their present extraordinary circumstances, forsaken, as it now appears, by their pastor and several of the elders and deacons, who have by an act unprecedented in the annals of this church, attempted unduti-fully to withdraw from the jurisdiction of this presbytery, nevertheless carefully to maintain the testimony to which they are bound by their solemn vows, to walk in the good order of the church of God, harmoniously to co-operate in promoting the interests of godliness, by a careful observance of the ordinances of the public, social and private duties of religion.

"4. That the presbytery while they view with unmingled disapprobation the irregular proceedings of the Rev. Dr. McLeod, and the officers of the church who have acted with him in the measures herein referred to, and leave him and them to the supervision of a superior court, before which these measures will undoubtedly in due season be arraigned, do at the same time solemnly warn all under their care from being seduced to join in pursuing this disorderly career, and exhort such as are now under its unhappy influence, to consider in due season the pernicious consequences, and turn to follow with their brethren the footsteps of the flock, the good old ways in which our fathers walked, and found rest to their souls."

From the foregoing acts, it appears that the southern presbytery refused to recognize the Chambers-street congregation as being from under their jurisdiction—denounced the conduct of Dr. McLeod and his session as being a violent and disgraceful outrage on church order, and contempt of ecclesiastical authority—referred the matter to the spring sessions of the eastern subordinate synod—declared that the presbytery, as an inferior court, was bound to respect the decision of the superior until set aside thereby—reversed the decision of the Chambers-street session in the case of the elders, deacons, and their adherents—recommended to the people, thus forsaken by the pastor and some of the officers of the congregation, to carefully maintain their testimony, to which they were bound by their solemn vows—and warned all under their care not to be seduced to pursue such a disorderly career; but admonished them to consider the pernicious consequences, and turn to follow with their brethren the footsteps of the flock, the good old ways in which their fathers walked, and found rest unto their souls.

In this state things existed at the time of the spring sessions of synod, April 9th, 1833.

On the 9th April, 1833, the eastern subordinate synod met, and was opened with a sermon by the moderator, the Rev. William Gibson, and constituted by prayer, after which, contrary to the usual custom, a motion for a vote of thanks was made *the same evening*, by Dr. McMaster, which was not carried, on the ground that it was not customary at so early a period, before the members were ascertained. The court adjourned to meet the following morning, in the Chambers-street church. Next morning (April 10th) met and constituted.

A motion was made by Dr. McMaster to proceed forthwith to the election of officers, before the members of the court were ascertained. He held in his hand an *old leaf*, as he said containing the rules of synod, according to which he contended that the election of officers was the first business before the court. The above leaf contained the rules of 1811, not now in use. The *imposition* was immediately detected, and it was shown that it was neither the custom of our courts to make this the first business, nor were those the rules in use at present; but another set of rules, adopted in 1828, and published in connection with the minutes of synod. On the conduct of Dr. McMaster we make no comment. It speaks for itself. The design was evidently to *exclude the elders from a vote in the election of officers*, a thing unprecedented in the annals of Presbyterianism.

The moderator appointed Messrs. McLeod and Roney to go and obtain a

copy of the rules. Mr. Roney declined, as he "did not feel in good health," perhaps thought one was quite enough to *run a boy's errand*, and, it is possible, did not *covet the companionship* of Mr. McLeod. The moderator freed Mr. Roney from the call. Mr. McLeod grasped at the idea of his appointment by the moderator to bring a copy of the rules, and *formally* announced to the court, before *running the errand*, that he was "appointed *a committee* to go and obtain a copy of the rules of synod!" A *committee* consisting of *one person*, who *met with himself* on *important ecclesiastical business*, that is, *carrying a pamphlet from Twelfth street!!* Such was his eagerness to grasp at the most slight recognition of his standing as a minister, that, when sent simply on an errand that any stranger boy could have done, had he known where to lay his hand upon the pamphlet, he considered himself *a committee of synod!* The only reason of appointing him to bring the rules was because, having been the former clerk, they were supposed to be in his possession, and that he knew where to lay his hands upon them. The rules being obtained, the moderator called upon Rev. Mr. Chrystie to call the roll, and ascertain the members of the court. The reason of this call upon Mr. Chrystie was not that he had been the clerk of the last meeting of the court, (i. e. in pro-re-nata,) but that Mr. McLeod was under suspension, and *the duty devolved on the moderator*, who was the *only existing officer*. A scene of tumult then commenced. Drs. Wylie, McMaster, and others, were determined to thrust Mr. McLeod upon the court as clerk, though disabled by the same court, at its session pro-re-nata. Dr. McMaster moved the appointment of a committee to adjust the difficulty. The majority believed it useless, and a mere waste of time, and proposed that the moderator should call upon any one belonging to Mr. McLeod's party to call the roll, and that thus neither side should be considered as committed upon the question of Mr. McLeod's suspension. This was violently resisted, and Drs. McMaster and Wylie, together with their adherents, *usurping the authority of the moderator, ordered* Mr. McLeod as clerk to call the roll, and ascertain the members. The majority of synod would not submit to this intolerance and disorder, therefore a motion was immediately put, in writing, from the moderator's chair, and read aloud, appointing Mr. Chrystie clerk pro tempore. The vote was put, and carried by a large majority, Dr. McMaster, Rev. W. Willson, and a few others voting in the negative.* The election was announced from the chair. The opposition was then formally put down, and the turbulent members withdrew without *any officer*, even *nominal*. The very minutes of synod were formally demanded from Mr. McLeod by the clerk, and a witness called to mark his refusal.

After the court proceeded to business, Dr. McMaster re-entered, and "*in his own name, and that of his brethren*," loudly "*protested*" *against the court as* "*a disorderly mob*." He and his brethren then withdrew to the church in Sixth-street, without any officer, either moderator or clerk. They set up an independent synod, (as they say, in connection with the general synod of the

* In the minutes of the members who withdrew to Sixth-street, they admit this fact, of some of them voting in the negative. See American Christian Expositor, p. 452.

Reformed Presbyterian church,) and proceeded to act upon the business of the church, and the minutes of the previous synod, refused to Mr. Chrystie, the regularly elected clerk; and had the impertinence to send a deputation on the following day, as was said, to inform the members then in session, that they (the refugees) were organized, and ready to receive their brethren. The deputation attempted to put a paper into the hands of Rev. William Gibson, not then in the chair, and when this could not be effected, attempted to read it, notwithstanding forbidden by the moderator, and directed, if they had any communication, to make it to the officers of the court. When they would not comply, a member came forward and crushed the paper, whereupon the deputation withdrew, Dr. Wylie saying, "that is all we want, let us go."

Before proceeding to state the business transacted by the Eastern Subordinate Synod, it may be proper to inquire, why did these men, on a preceding day, withdraw so *precipitately*, and *without officers?* To undeceive the community, it is deemed proper to state the reasons.

1. They were *in a minority*, and they well knew it.

2. They had *but one regular minister* who could act in synod, and at least four of their ruling elders were irregular. They could not act as members of synod, because under libel.

Dr. McMaster, Rev. Samuel W. Crawford, Dr. Wylie, Rev. J. McMaster, and William Willson were under libel before the bar of synod, and cited to appear and answer to the same. Rev. James W. Stewart and Rev. J. N. McLeod were both under libel, and the latter actually suspended from the exercise of his ministry. Messrs Gayley and A. S. McMaster, though ordained, had never been introduced to synod, and could not be known as members till regularly introduced. The Rev. John Gibson, who has since *prudently abandoned them*, was the only regular minister belonging to that party, who could be recognized by the court. Most of them were under libel. As to the elders, certainly four can be clearly shown to have no right to a seat in synod. At the utmost, *only one minister* and six ruling elders could have any regular claim to transact business in any regular court. On the other hand, *eleven ministers* and thirteen ruling elders had an undisputed right to sit in synod, according to all the forms and usages of the Presbyterian church. This accounts for the boisterous and hasty elopement of so many of the above presbyters. Most of them were fugitives from church discipline. They dared not stay to hazard a trial before the synod, for their disorderly and schismatical proceedings.

On the 10th inst. the minutes of the pro-re-nata were read, and unanimously sustained—the members of committees were appointed—an assistant clerk chosen—Rev. W. Gibson re-elected moderator, and Rev. Mr. Chrystie continued as clerk.

On the 11th a resolution was passed, that the Rev. Dr. S. B. Wylie, Dr. G. McMaster, Rev. S. W. Crawford, Rev. William Willson, and Rev. J. McMaster be cited before the court, and answer to the libel served on them, and for their contempt of the court, manifested by their tumultuous and disorderly departure on the preceding day, and continued by the conduct of one of their party on this day. The assistant clerk was appointed to serve the citations.

On the following day, the clerk reported that he had served the citations. A third citation was appointed, and served by Messrs. Houston and Dickey. The report of the committee on discipline was passed upon on the afternoon of the 12th, embracing the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That the Rev. Dr. Samuel B. Wylie, Dr. Gilbert McMaster, Rev. Samuel W. Crawford, Rev. John McMaster, and Rev. William Willson, having been found guilty by this court—1. Of following divisive courses. 2. Contempt of the authority of synod. 3. Error in doctrine. 4. Abandonment of the testimony of the church,—and 5. Slandering synod and its members—be, and *hereby are*, suspended from the exercise of the office of the holy ministry, and from the privileges of the church."

This resolution passed with only one negative vote. It was given by the writer of this document, who asked, and had leave to record his *reasons of dissent*, which were never published with the minutes.*

From the above statement, it appears that due notice was given to the parties concerned. The libel was put into their hands—they were three times cited to appear before the bar of synod—they disregarded the citations, and held a synod, without the legal officers, presuming to do the business of the regular court, and set at defiance all ecclesiastical order, producing disorder and tumult before abandoning the regular Eastern Subordinate Synod.

The reasons of the above suspension were not (as is falsely stated) voting at elections, or publishing contrary to the act of synod simply; but one continued scene of *outrage*, and *insult*, and *rebellion*, embracing many items, all disorderly and schismatical. Without taking all into the account, the Reformed Presbyterian church would not probably sustain the decision of the synod, though similar decisions have been sustained without the hundredth part of the offence given, or disorder committed. How these brethren could take offence at the act of synod, is difficult to conceive, unless it were that *regular steps*, according to the order of the church, *were taken* to bring the matter to an issue, measures which would stand the test of future examination! Most of these men in consistories, sessions, and presbyteries, expressed their approbation of Dr. McLeod's session, in suspending more than one hundred and forty church members without libel, charge, citation, or notice of any description, and in thrusting a suspended minister upon a congregation, contrary to the wish and protestation of a majority of the people; and all this, we apprehend, because it was disorderly, cruel, and factious; why then should they be displeased with the synod in suspending Dr. Wylie, &c. except that it was orderly, and also just? It is true it might be accounted for on the ground of selfishness, but it would be hard to charge such "*liberal*" minded men with esteeming that cruel and unjust in their own case, which they would account merciful and holy in the case of one hundred and forty persons and their families!

The cause of the late disturbance in the Reformed Presbyterian church, has been wrongfully ascribed to Dr. Willson's publication of his Prince Messiah, as also to the meeting pro-re-nata of the synod in November. There is nothing more foreign from fact.

* To the published minutes we refer for a detail of the business that came before the court.

The true causes are—1. Some ministers had become weary of that part of our "Act and Testimony" that referred to our civil relations with this country; and not having the magnanimity to propose an alteration in the public courts, took underhanded measures to subvert the principles laid down, and practices enjoined. 2. They got up an *anti-synodical* letter, subverting both the principles and usages on the head of magistracy, as adopted by the Reformed Presbyterian church, some of themselves, at an early period of our history, being very active in the enacting of laws and settling practice of which they have become weary. 3. This anti-synodical letter, instead of *formally* attacking the principles and practices of the church, did it *covertly*, and abounded in abuse of those who differed from them in attachment to old laws and usages. 4. When their conduct was to be investigated, instead of appearing to defend themselves, and their *novel practices*, they refused submission to the ecclesiastical courts, and set up consistories, sessions, and presbyteries, to disannul the decisions and acts of synods.

These are some of the causes of the late disturbances. It is preposterous to say that it was the publication of Prince Messiah. Far more reasonable would it be to charge it upon "The Sons of Oil," "War Sermons," "Duty of Nations," and the "Act and Testimony." The principles and practices taught and recommended in the above, are precisely the same as in Prince Messiah. The only difference is in one argument or illustration, and that in relation to General Washington. Say the author was mistaken, or had published what he knew to be false, why attack him and the rest of his brethren so basely in a pastoral letter and notes? Why not cite him before the authorities of the church? For the plain reason that they knew Dr. Willson *would submit to the authorities*, and they knew that he *would be sustained* in the publication, with the single exception of the remarks on General Washington.

The only way in which the disturbance can be charged upon the pro-re-nata, is, that if the members of synod had only submitted as "*a matter of forbearance*," to let their *principles*, and *practices*, and *character* be *abused*, without calling offenders to account, all would have been well—all would have been peace! Thank you, gentlemen, these terms are too dear for a purchase of peace. Dr. Franklin himself would say that "this was paying too dear for the whistle."

We beg leave to remark, that the question now agitating the Reformed Presbyterian church, is not whether the members may vote, or sit on juries, or hold slaves. The question is, whether the American government is the ordinance of God, and whether our Testimony is true, that says it is not? Let not covenanters be deceived, for this is the very jet of the question. According to our principles, can any government be accounted God's ordinance that does not acknowledge God's law as paramount to all laws of man?—that does *not adopt the Scriptures* as the rule to glorify God in civil relations?—that refuses to submit to the government of the Lord Jesus Christ?—and that holds the African and his children in perpetual bondage? Can they be covenanters who answer all these questions in the affirmative? If they can, it is high time that our Testimony should be committed to the flames, like the *covenants of our fathers*, by the hands of the common hangman.

We have seen how affairs stood at the close of the sessions of the Eastern

Subordinate Synod, in April, 1833. However rebellious, schismatical and disorderly the conduct of Dr. Wylie and his adherents had been, it was hoped that when the general synod would meet, they would have submitted their case for a full and impartial investigation. This hope was ill-founded, and need never have been indulged, had the members reflected that no protest was lodged against the decisions of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, nor appeal to the superior court—that they had nothing to hope from the western members of general synod, who were ardently attached to reformation principles—and that the same violence and disorder which would thrust a suspended minister upon synod as a clerk, would induce to thrust in another as a moderator.

Before the meeting of general synod, some of the New-Light party had caused to be published in some of the daily and weekly journals, and Dr. Wylie had announced from the pulpit some time previous, that Mr. Crawford (then under suspension,) was to open the synod with a sermon, on the evening of the 7th August, 1833. The above notice convinced all those who respected the order of Christ's house, that rebellion was contemplated, and that as the Eleventh-street church was in the hands of Dr. Wylie's partizans, there was no hope of the *regular moderator* being at liberty to constitue the court. Besides, threats had been made, provided there should be an attempt to introduce Mr. Roney, who had been appointed in 1831 Mr. Crawford's substitute, in case of any emergency; and it has been since ascertained, that the police officers were called, and in readiness in a public house adjacent.

The Eastern Subordinate Synod met by adjournment in Philadelphia at the call of the moderator, and resolved that they could not recognize the ministrations of Mr. Crawford, while under suspension from the exercise of the ministry, and instructed its clerk to notify the general synod, through its clerk, that Mr. Crawford was suspended from the exercise of his office. This was done by the clerk; but as a rude answer was given by Dr. Black, the clerk of general synod, it seemed necessary that the members of general synod should be notified in some other way, as it was plainly intimated in the reply of Dr. Black, "*that he would not treat with rebels*," that he was determined to support Mr. Crawford in the chair, and not give the necessary information.

At the suggestion of two of the western members, Messrs. Kell and H. McMillan, an extra judicial meeting of the delegates was called, to deliberate on the proper course to be adopted in the present emergency. In connection with this, it was agreed that the day should be principally devoted to fasting, humiliation and prayer.

The conference met on the 7th inst. in the Cherry-street church, which came to the conclusion that it would be disorderly to recognize Mr. Crawford as moderator, while under suspension, and *recommended* that the clerk of the Eastern Subordinate synod should notify the delegates publicly, should Mr. Crawford attempt to force himself upon the synod; and that, if he still persisted, the only legal moderator, Mr. Roney, should call upon the members to peaceably withdraw to the Reformed Presbyterian church, in Cherry-street.

All this was carried into effect, and *thirty-six* regularly certified members

withdrew from Eleventh-street, and met in the church in Cherry-street, to organize the court. Of these thirty-six, eighteen were ministers, and eighteen ruling elders.

There remained then in Eleventh-street, twenty-five said to have been duly certified—viz. fourteen ministers, and eleven ruling elders. Of these fourteen ministers, *seven* were under suspension, and *one* had been ordained by ministers while themselves under libel. Of the *eleven* ruling elders, *three* were suspended, and *another* had no right to a seat according to the law of general synod, which admits no more than one ruling elder from any congregation, settled or vacant. One of the two elders from Philadelphia had no right to a seat. There is no reasonable man, who has any respect for Presbyterian order, that can recognize more than *twelve* persons on their list, (or at most *thirteen*,) as having any right to a seat in a regular court, where church order is regarded. Of the others on their list, they say in page 3d of their printed minutes, that *four* "did not appear," and that *other four* presented their certificates and took their seats on the *seventh* day of their sessions. (Compare pp. 3 and 12, printed minutes.)

After the separation, each proceeded to act as if the general synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church, and as if there were no claimants of similar or superior standing.

On reading the minutes of Dr. Wylie's synod, it will appear to the impartial reader, that to put down the pro-re-nata was their principal business, and reproach all those who considered it as regularly called and held; well knowing that if it stands the test of church order, their standing is utterly gone. Every other business appears to have been of minor consideration. But more of this hereafter. A monstrous appendix, of 64 pages, containing "a proposed plan of harmony," which was *never proposed* to *any* or *all* of the eastern members—a report of *Dr. Wylie's eastern synod* on the *pro-re-nata*—papers from Chambers-street session—Chambers-street congregation—Sixth-street congregation,* &c. &c. containing most gross and palpable misstatements, calculated to mislead the innocent and unsuspecting—reports of committees, in vindication of themselves in their disorder, rebellion, and abuse of power—alterations in the very essence of the covenant contemplated between the Reformed churches in Europe and America, and other matters worthy of the people who were seated in the Eleventh-street church, calling themselves Covenanters, were passed upon by these kind and orderly brethren! To some of the more important matters contained in their minutes and appendix, attention will be given hereafter.

As to the proceedings of the synod holding its sessions in Cherry-street church, they are left to speak for themselves. It will be seen that no uneasiness was manifested about the fate of the *pro-re-nata:* that they proceeded to transact the regular business that came before them, without a single effort to swell their numbers by a forced delegation; that they had no suspended members; none that came with false certificates, or without any; that

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* There never was a paper from the Sixth-street congregation; but from a few disaffected persons, and signed by a few others who were deceived; and some of them never were in our communion.

they had no consultative members, either ministers or ruling elders; that they employed no harsh language in relation to the Wylie faction; that they did not excommunicate even the rebellious and disorderly, and suspended ministers who had been breaking down the established order and published principles of the Reformed Presbyterian church; that they only declared their actings invalid, as they had gone out from us, and that our people should hold no ecclesiastical fellowship with them.

As the *legality* of the pro-re-nata synod of November 21st, 1832, has been denied—of the April subordinate synod, of which Rev. William Gibson was the moderator, that met in New York, April 9th, 1833—and of the delegation synod, that met in Cherry-street church, Philadelphia, on the 7th of August, 1833, and of which Mr. Roney was the moderator; the legality of each of these shall be shown in order.

I. *The Legality of the Pro-re-nata Synod.*

1. *An extra call* of a presbytery or synod is always in order. The moderator has a right to convene the members whenever he pleases, and for whatever cause he pleases, and the members are *bound to obey* his call. It is true that when they are met, they may sustain his call, or censure him for a vexatious and unnecessary call, if they see proper; but, in the mean time, he has full power to collect the members, and then his power ceases. They, not he, decide upon the propriety of the call. Prudence dictates that he should be well advised as to the propriety of the measure—and the direction of the church is to that effect. A distinction is to be made between the *call itself*, and *the reasons* supporting the call. The call must be in proper form, and in due time; but it is an after question for the court, whether the moderator will be sustained.

The above statement is supported by the following authorities:

Stewart's Collections. Book I. *Tit.* ix. *Sec.* 1.—"The moderator may upon *any extraordinary emergency*, by his circular letters, convene presbyteries and synods before their ordinary time of meeting. So may the moderator of the last general assembly. Only they would be sure to have sufficient ground, and so cautious, as to have *a multitude of counsellors* to warrant and support their adventure." And again,

Book I. *Tit.* xiv. *Sec.* 5.—"The General Assembly, December 20, 1638, declares, that by divine, ecclesiastical and civil warrant, the assembly of this national church hath power and liberty to assemble and convene in her general assemblies, and oftener, PRO-RE-NATA, as occasion and necessity shall require."

Judicatory Practice of the Church of Scotland, sec. iv., *under the article* "*Pro-re-nata meeting*"—quoted from the American Christian Expositor, p. 326.—"Meetings of synod pro-re-nata are occasionally, but very rarely held. The act of assembly of 1647, asserts the right of assembling *synodically as well pro-re-nata* as at ordinary times."

Form of Government adopted by the Presbyterian Church, May, 1821. pp. 386 and 387. See chap. xix. "Of Moderators."—"The moderator is to be considered as possessing, by delegation from the whole body, all authority necessary for the preservation of order; for *convening* and adjourning the judi-

catory, and directing its operations according to the rules of the church. And he shall likewise be empowered, on *any* extraordinary emergency, to *convene* the judicatory, by his *circular letter, before the ordinary time of meeting.*"

From the above statements it appears, that the moderator may upon *any* extraordinary emergency call a meeting of synod, pro-re-nata—that he should be careful to have sufficient ground for calling it—that he should have a multitude of counsellors to warrant the call—that even when counselled by a multitude, it is at his own hazard he convenes the members—that even the highest church court (the general assembly) may be assembled pro-re-nata—that such meeting is of the *same court*, though met under different circumstances. "The right of assembling *synodically as well pro-re-nata* as at other times." A call by the moderator is, therefore, always in order, though, when met, his reasons should not be sustained.

We might rest the argument here, but

2. *The circumstances of the church fully justified the moderator in calling the meeting.*

Certain ministers and ruling elders had, in violation of the act of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, published part of a pastoral address, rejected by synod as contrary to the principles and practices of our church, and added notes equally offensive; from which it appeared to many that they were guilty of *following divisive courses, contemning the authority of synod, teaching error in doctrine, abandoning the church's testimony, and slandering both the synod and its members.*

Suppose they were mistaken in this view of the conduct and the publication, yet there was sufficient ground for the brethren to solicit, and the moderator to call an extra meeting; and if these things were not so, how easy for the members who had given offence to have justified their conduct? Besides, the moderator could not but know, that however excellent the pastoral address, it was published in direct violation of the orders of the court, which said that a considerable part of it was unfit to be circulated in the different congregations under their care. He was bound to support the honor of the court, which could be done in no other way than by assembling the members to take order in the case.

Besides, admit the basest motives upon the part of those who requested the call of the synod, and the moderator who issued the summons, and that the absentees *knew the thoughts of the heart* of both the moderator and the persons who requested him to call the meeting, it furnishes no reason why a *formal* and *regular* call by the proper officer should be despised. To the arguments offered against the pro-re-nata, or extra meeting of the synod, we shall advert hereafter, in stating and answering objections. Suffice it here to be said, that no objection has been made that it was not called by the *proper person*, in *due form*, with *legal notification*, after *taking sufficient counsel*, and that *citations were duly received:* but objections have been offered utterly foreign from an invalidation of the call.

II. *The Legality of the Subordinate Synod, of which Rev. William Gibson was the Moderator.*

Our arguments shall be few, as the question of its legality is so plain as to almost exclude reasoning upon it.

1. The Eastern Subordinate Synod met at *the time* and in *the place* to which it had adjourned.

2. The regular moderator took the chair at the time appointed, and opened the court by prayer, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus, the church's head.

3. All the disaffected brethren who had been opposed to the pro-re-nata meeting, were present—recognized the moderator—and co-operated during the *whole of the first*, and part of the *second session*. Thus formally and explicitly declaring that Rev. William Gibson was the legal moderator, and that this was the Eastern Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church. They even *voted* a number of times, Rev. W. Gibson in the chair.

4. A clerk pro tempore was elected before Dr. McMaster and his brethren withdrew, in which election Dr. McMaster, Rev. William Willson, and others, voted in the negative.

5. They left *a majority* of the members of the court in session. This we will make appear by their own showing, and by additional facts.

In their published minutes, second volume of the American Christian Expositor, No. 12, they give an account of all their members, amounting to twenty-two—whereas, the synod, sitting in Chambers-street, amounted to twenty-four, eleven ministers, and thirteen ruling elders. Of the latter, not one could on presbyterial principles be refused a seat; whereas, of the former, nine ministers and four ruling elders can be shown to be utterly disqualified from holding a seat in synod. If this can be made appear, then there will be seen to have been not only a majority, but a very large one, remaining in the Chambers-street church.

Admitting the legality of the November meeting of Synod, (that is, that it was regularly called,) then Dr. Wylie, Dr. McMaster, Rev. S. W. Crawford, Rev'ds. J. McMaster, Wm. Willson, J. N. McLeod, and J. W. Stewart, were under libel for offences supposed to be committed, and for which they were about to be tried before the court. One of them (Rev. J. N. McLeod) was under suspension. As a *pro-re-nata* synod is *the same* with that which meets on its regular adjournment, only met under *different circumstances*, it follows, that at the regular stated meeting the court *knew them to be under libel*, and therefore they could not *regularly* act in court until the cause was issued; much less, without the officers of the court, set up another in opposition to that regularly constituted, and then in session. Thus *seven* of their number is at once stricken from the list of regular members, reducing their number to *fifteen*. Messrs. Gailey and A. S. McMaster had not been introduced to the court, and could not therefore be recognized. This reduces them to thirteen, leaving them only *one regular minister* (Rev. John Gibson) to form the *constituent members* of the *new synod*, which they in a disorderly manner organized in Sixth-street.

No ruling elder is a constituent member of any court higher than a session, until his certificate is read. Therefore only one regular member withdrew.

Four of their ruling elders had no right to a seat in synod, after it was constituted. This appears from the following considerations.

Mr. Thomas Cummings had *no certificate* of appointment to synod. His session had appointed him, and exercising their undoubted right of reconsidering any vote they might have passed, they did reconsider it—disannulled it, and previous to the meeting of synod appointed another in his place. From the appointment of Mr. Houston, Mr. Cummings appealed to the southern presbytery, and obtained extracts from the session's minutes, for that purpose; but though the presbytery met before synod, he did not bring forward his appeal, and by consequence it was null and void. *He never had a certificate of his appointment.* Even the extracts from the session's minutes were not presented to the association in Sixth-street—they were found lying on the floor of the Chambers street church, after the disorderly departure, that part appointing Mr. Houston in the place of Mr. Cummings being separated from the other. Mr. William Pattison was *not sent* by the session of White Lake, and had no certificate. Mr. Cunningham was under libel, and cited for trial before the bar of the Eastern Subordinate Synod. Dr. Lister was suspended by the northern presbytery.

This reduces their number, even after their constitution, to *nine persons; one* minister, and *eight* ruling elders. But it will be remembered that no elder is a constituent member until his certificate has been received: therefore, *only one regular* member, *known* to the court, withdrew to Sixth-street.

III. *Legality of the August General Synod, that met in Cherry-street.*

1. No minister under suspension from the exercise of his office, while under that suspension can preside in any church court, nor even hold his seat as a member; but Mr. Crawford, the former moderator, was laid under suspension, at the regular spring sessions of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, that met in Chambers-street church on April 9th, 1833, and which has been shown to be the regular legal Eastern Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church.

2. The general synod at its sessions in Philadelphia, August —, 1831, appointed Mr. Roney as the substitute of Mr. Crawford, in case of any emergency whereby Mr. Crawford could not act as the moderator. As Mr. Crawford was suspended, and *no appeal* was taken from the decision of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, he was disqualified to act as moderator.

3. Had Mr. Crawford's offence been one of notorious scandal, such as theft or adultery, there can be no question but his seat should have been denied him, and Mr. Roney proceed to take the chair; but if he was found guilty of "following divisive courses—contemning the authority of synod—teaching error in doctrine—abandoning the testimony of the church—and slandering synod and its members," surely all this was scandalous: but so the synod had said, and therefore suspended him.

4. Every decision of an inferior court is considered law binding until set aside by the superior. This is true, as well in ecclesiastical as in civil decisions. A man is always held *innocent*, till a judgment has passed against him; thence he is considered *guilty*, till the decision is reversed.

5. Legal notice was given of the disqualification of Mr. Crawford. By order of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, its clerk notified Dr. Black, the clerk of general synod, that Mr. Crawford was under suspension, which he

(Dr. Black) disregarded, saying "he would not treat with rebels." In addition to this, the above notification was publicly made to the whole of the general synod, by the clerk of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, that all might be left inexcusable, if they recognized him acting officially.

6. Mr. Roney, the real moderator, finding Mr. Crawford determined to proceed, and knowing that, as the meeting house was in possession of Dr. Wylie, a disturbance would be made if he there attempted to preach the sermon, and open the court, according to the instructions of the extra judicial conference, called upon the regular and orderly members of the court, who recognized him as moderator, to follow him to the Reformed Presbyterian church in Cherry-street, that he might deliver the sermon, and constitute the court.

This he did, acting upon the principle that as Mr. Crawford was under suspension, he (Mr. Roney) was the legal moderator, appointed by the general synod; and upon the published minutes of the general synod, passed in 1831, appointing the next meeting in Philadelphia, but not mentioning the house of assembling, whether in Dr. Wylie's church, or elsewhere.

7. A large majority of the ministers that remained, and co-operated with Mr. Crawford, were themselves under suspension. It was their interest to support Mr. Crawford, as they were his companions in disgrace.

From the above arguments it will be perceived, that as the extra, or *pro-re-nata* was regularly called, the ministers and elders were legally placed under libel—that as the Eastern Subordinate Synod was regularly constituted by the Rev. William Gibson, on the 9th of April, and the others left him in the chair, before another was elected, and that meeting sustained and confirmed the acts of the extra meeting of the synod, upon a review of its minutes—and followed up the libel, by citing the libelled before them, and, when they despised the citation, trying, finding them guilty, and suspending them, and no appeal was taken from their decision, that Mr. Crawford and many of his adherents were disqualified from acting in the church courts, until the decision should be reversed by a superior court—and that as Mr. Roney was truly the regular moderator, and the synod constituted by him the regular superior synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church, then, as they confirmed the acts of the extra meeting of the sub-synod, and those of the April meeting, all the adherents of Mr. Crawford have gone out, in a state of rebellion, from the constituted authorities of the Reformed Presbyterian church in the United States.

Every argument that establishes the legality of these three meetings of synod, demonstrates, as far as it goes, the illegality of all those synods held by Dr. Wylie and his party. It is not attempted to be denied by the writer of these sheets, that Dr. Wylie and his faction held synods, and performed acts; but it is utterly denied that they held any synod in connection with the Reformed Presbyterian church in America, or according to its laws and usages. If they chose, (so far as man is concerned,) they had a right to secede, and did secede. They are not known, and cannot be known, as belonging to the Reformed Presbyterian church; they not maintaining either its order or its principles.

This will appear by considering their *external standing*, and *advocated sentiments*. Their own statements furnish the fullest evidence that, in their con-

stitution and management of affairs, they had no respect for Presbyterial order.

1. *They changed the order of calling the delegates.* The uniform order had been, as will be seen by a reference to all the published minutes of the synod, to commence with the northern presbytery, and terminate with the southern. Had they inverted the order, commencing with the southern, and ending with the northern delegates, no remark would be made, though contrary to our *uniform practice;* but they skipped about from the Philadelphia presbytery, of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, to the western presbytery, of the Western Subordinate Synod, &c. But why complain of this? Not because of the mere change of the order in calling, but the *base design* of pursuing this course. It was that they might *secure a seat* to their *suspended ministers,* before those of regular standing could be ascertained—and in addition to this, that they might, by the vote of those suspended persons, whether ministers or elders, already ascertained, object to and strike off the *only regular ministers* that had a right to be delegated. For instance—according to their mode of calling the roll, the Philadelphia ministers, all of whom, except one, were suspended, would obtain a seat without opposition. The members from the Western Subordinate Synod, present, being next called, and known to be favorable to the Wylie men, would be ready to receive the suspended ministers from the western presbytery of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, and *reject* the only regular members of said presbytery, viz. Messrs. Roberts and Fisher. Thus would they secure a seat to all their suspended ministers, before the regular members could be ascertained, and, having power in their hands, could reject them all, as they would undoubtedly have done. This was evidently the design of changing the order of calling the roll, and skipping about from synod to synod, without any regard to order.

2. They placed upon their list names of "*certified members*" *who were not in Philadelphia on the occasion*, and who were at the time distant from Philadelphia from three to eight hundred miles. They themselves say in the foot note of page 3d of their published minutes, that "Rev. Messrs. Ferris and Cooper, ministers, and Messrs. Blair, McClurkin, Wyatt and Gormly, ruling elders, did not appear, although their certificates were presented."

It is doubtful whether any of these persons were regularly certified to Dr. Wylie's synod. One thing is certain—that some of them, had they been present, would neither have recognized the Wylie synod, nor its *principles*, and that *Mr. Gormly was not regularly certified, nor present.*

The report of the Pittsburgh presbytery, certified by its clerk, Mr. George Scott, and published in the minutes of the general synod, page 23d, certifies Mr. Gormly, Dr. Black, and Mr. Gill. That report never came before the synod of which Dr. Black is the clerk; therefore, neither Mr. Gormly, Dr. Black, nor Mr. Gill, was certified to them. It is true that they tell us, page 8th of the minutes of the spurious synod, that "the presbytery of Pittsburgh presented their report. It was read, accepted, and referred." The plain reader would take for granted, in reading the above extract, that a report certified by the clerk of the Pittsburgh presbytery had been presented, while there is nothing more foreign from fact. Dr. Wylie's synod *never received one line of a presbyterial report, from Mr. Scott, the clerk, and*

they knew it. It was a sheer imposition upon the Christian community. That a report was *got up in Philadelphia*, by *somebody*, is probable; but they never got the true report.

3. Comparing Mr. Scott's report from the Pittsburgh presbytery, with the 3d page of the Wylie minutes, and 12th of the same, we perceive that four others of their members had no right to seats as delegates, and were not recognized for seven days after the constitution, though Dr. Black and his colleagues have the effrontery to place them on the list, as belonging to the transactions of the first day of their sessions. These four are, T. C. Guthrie and A. W. Black, ministers—James McVicker and Thomas Smith, ruling elders. To make this matter plain to every reader, a quotation is given from the report of the Pittsburgh presbytery, as signed by George Scott, presbytery's clerk. And it will be remembered, that Mr. Scott does not belong to the general synod, but has since attached himself to Dr. Wylie and his adherents.

"The following are appointed delegates to your reverend body, viz. *Rev. Dr. Black*, Rev. Messrs. John Cannon, Robert Wallace, *Jonathan Gill*, William Sloan, James Blackwood, Thomas Sproull, and John Crozier, together with ruling elders Robert Brown, (Thomas Gemmil his alternate) Robert Gray, (James Stitt his alternate) Samuel Wylie, Nathan Johnston, James Cook, (John Young his alternate) Thomas Willson, James McIlroy, and *James Gormly.*"

In addition to the above, it may be remarked, that while Messrs. Guthrie and A. W. Black were not certified, as appears from the above extract, they had been *nominated* in their own presbytery as delegates, and were *negatived.* The presbytery *would not send them.*

Query. Would the general assembly admit a person to a seat, who did *not* come certified by *the proper organ?*—who had been *rejected as a delegate* at the regular meeting of his own court?—on the appointment of *a few members* of presbytery, assembled *out of its own bounds?*—and on the *seventh* day of its sessions?—and enroll on its first day's minutes, as a constituent member of the court? Would any body, that respected any order? Would they enroll, as members, persons distant *eight hundred miles!!*

4. Dr. Wylie's disorderly synod, according to their own showing, page 4th of their printed minutes, invited to a seat, as consultative members, Rev. S. M. Gayley, Messrs. William Pattison, *Thomas Cummings*, James Gamble, Oliver Selfridge, and John Ewart, elders. They are said to have taken their seats accordingly.

Mr. Gayley informed Messrs. Evans and R. Gibson that he did not accept of a seat—and it is known well that he was present much of his time, in the Cherry-street church, with the synod. In all our acquaintance with the transactions of delegated courts, we have not known an instance of ruling elders being invited as consultative members. Certain it is, that they are not constituent members of any court higher than a session, without *express appointment:* and these gentlemen seem to be fully sensible of this; for they proceeded a great deal farther, when they received a resolution, and referred it to a committee, to report thereon at the next meeting of synod, wherein they seem disposed to cut off the power of ruling elders, in voting for clothing

a minister with office, or unclothing him when he has forfeited his right to ecclesiastical standing. See pp. 10 and 11 of their minutes. They seem to think *the fearless integrity* of ruling elders, as a limitation of their *arbitrary measures!* It is hoped our elders will see through this audacious attempt to destroy their rights.

5. The above assembly violated two standing acts of the Reformed Presbyterian church, in the reception of elders. The *former act* was passed at Coldenham, August, 1817, in which it was appointed that but one ruling elder could be a delegate to synod from any congregation in our connection. The reason of this act was, that some of the ministers came forward without elders from their own congregations, and selected from the congregation of Coldenham nearly, if not all the elders, who controlled almost every vote. The *latter act* arose from a dispute concerning the seats of several elders belonging to the Philadelphia congregation, in the synod of 1831, whereby that congregation, instead of having a representation of two, Dr. Wylie and his elder, had a representation of six or eight.

But we find Messrs. Sterling and McAdam from Philadelphia congregation, recognized as members; and Messrs. Gormly, McVickar, and Smith, from that of Pittsburgh. Two ministers and two ruling elders, from the Philadelphia congregation—one minister and three ruling elders from that of Pittsburgh. This, like the former, with a view of obtaining a majority, come from what quarter they might, and even when they remained at home!

6. Their *great respect for Presbyterial order* farther appears from their violation of rules v. and vi., as adopted by synod. These rules are as follows:

"Rule 5th. After reading the minutes, standing committees shall be appointed."

"Rule 6th. The *unfinished* business that is before the court, shall then be disposed of."

Before the appointment of the committees, it will be observed, page 4th, Eleventh street minutes, and first session, that the order of the following day was appointed. (*The distressing pro-re-nata*, which seemed to haunt them perpetually.) All appointments of committees—all unfinished business—every thing must give way, that the suspended ministers might *acquit themselves* from all disorder, sin and shame, and enjoy an early opportunity of reproaching the courts of Christ that were not disposed to abandon the reformation cause, and the standards of the church. In fact, the almost entire business of that assembly seems to have been, *to prop the standing of Mr. J. N. McLeod—make decisions to meet the chancellor's suit, in relation to the Chambers-street property*—and to *extricate the suspended ministers*, without ever inquiring whether they had abandoned the church's testimony, slandered their brethren, violated church order, or trampled under foot the authorities of the church! It is true, there was some apology for this neglect, viz. that it would only have been a mock trial, as most of them would have been judging in their own case!

To illustrate the objects in view, see the proposal to compensate the assistant clerk, (as stated, page 10th,) a thing never before proposed among Reformed Presbyterians, but got up merely to give him an opportunity of dis-

playing his extreme generosity—his public spirit. See, also, the whole appendix of their *admirable book*, called "the minutes of the general synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church," except one document in which they secretly cut up the whole moral and descending obligation of the covenants of our fathers; and virtually do away with all creeds and confessions. In that, *for once*, they seem to have overlooked the hated pro-re-nata men, except in so far as they could not banish the thought, that if they had held a place on that floor, they would have made an effort before they had permitted such gross sacrilege to pass with impunity.

7. Perhaps, however, their magnanimous, Christian, and *liberal* act, in cutting off from the visible fellowship of the Reformed Presbyterian church thirty-six members of synod, then in session, and all their adherents, amounting to many thousands, by one short resolution, will justify the Christian community in sustaining them as the general synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church!

On the 13th of August, as stated in their minutes, page 10th, they appointed a committee of three to repair to the church in Cherry-street, to read the following citation: "The general synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church, hereby cite the Rev. James Chrystie, Moses Roney, and their associates, *to return forthwith to their duty.*" The same session they prepared a resolution, which they passed in the following. It is as follows: "Resolved, that the pro-re-nata *ministers* and *all their adherents be*, and they hereby are declared to be, *no longer members* of the Reformed Presbyterian church; and that the subordinate judicatories be, and they hereby are directed with all convenient speed to strike their names from the rolls of their members.' A few remarks are offered on this singularly *malicious*, *foolish*, and *wicked proceeding*.

1. On the 13th inst. they call us their "*brethren*," and call upon us to "*return to our duty.*" Passing over the *brotherhood*, which we count no compliment, they recognize us *as members*. If not, why call us *to return* to our *duty?* Had we belonged to one of the surrounding denominations, would they have done so? Undoubtedly they would not. On the 13th, therefore, on their own showing, we belonged to the communion of Reformed Presbyterians.

2. On the 14th they pass the resolution that we are no more so. How did we cease to be so? Hear *their own words*: "Resolved, that *they be*, and they hereby are *declared to be*," &c. Here we have both the *excommunication*, and the *declaration* of it formally. "*All their adherents*" are included in this act. It is now ascertained that more than three-fourths of all that were Reformed Presbyterians in the United States, are their adherents. They are many thousands.

3. They order the subordinate judicatories to strike their names from the rolls. Not to treat with them—not to try them; but, as cut off by the above act, to be stricken from the rolls.

4. Their work seems to be *progressive*. *Only!! one hundred and forty-three* were cut off by the Chambers-street session, without citation or trial, simply because they would not recognize the official acts of a *suspended minister*: but on the 14th August, 1833, *thousands* are cut off, because they too

would not recognize the official acts of a suspended minister!! What they will do for "*liberal*" work in future, is hard to say, except they undertake the excommunication of the general assembly, and "all their adherents." As they are progressing so rapidly in their *good work*, it is not to be expected that the destruction of even their own adherents would satisfy them. They fulminate their Bulls of excommunication by wholesale.

5. This unholy attempt of theirs must necessarily be invalid: for,

(1.) They were illegally constituted, having a suspended minister as their moderator.

(2.) The act was done without any forms of trial. The persons condemned behoved to have a libel put into their hands, or at least three regular citations.

(3.) They had not enough of regular ministers to form a quorum, to transact any business.

(4.) The act was *in its very nature unjust*, and therefore could not be binding. It was because the members would not relinquish their principles, and abandon the order of the church, by waiting on the ministrations of a man under suspension.

(5.) Mr. Roney was the regular moderator, appointed at the previous sessions in 1831, as the substitute in case of any emergency.

(6.) The persons attempted to be excommunicated, constituted the court, while the *liberal* men! were merely *a faction*, as well as a *minority*.

This leads us forward to the consideration of another topic, viz:

Dr. Wylie and his party do not maintain the distinctive principles of Covenanters, either in theory or in practice.

To illustrate this, we shall place the opinions of each in opposite columns.

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"He (the civil magistrate) hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed."—*Westminster Confession, chap.* xxiii. *sec.* 3.	"It is susceptible of demonstration, that since the commencement of Christianity, no government on earth has had a fairer claim to recognition as the ordinance of God, than that of these United States."—*Orig. draft of a Pastoral Address, p.* 10.
"The duties required in the second commandment are—the disapproving, detesting, opposing, *all false worship*: and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry."—*Larger Catech. Ques.* 108.	"The most obnoxious feature,—indeed we may say, the *only* obnoxious one—the existence of slavery, is rapidly softening in its unsightly aspect."—*Ib. p.* 11.
"The word of God, which is con-	"In this federal compact, no member of the union is at all pledged to aid or abet either the existence or the continuance of slavery. Although the federal compact did not, nay, could not, abolish this dreadful evil, yet it in *no sense* contributed to it, or *countenanced* it. All its bearings shed an

tained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may *glorify* and enjoy him."—*Sh. Cat. Ques. 2d.*

"But no power, which deprives the subject of civil liberty—which wantonly squanders his property, and sports with his life—or which authorizes false religion, (however it may exist according to Divine Providence) is approved of, or sanctioned by God, or ought to be esteemed or supported by man, as a moral institution."—*Ref. Princ. p.* 104, 1*st ed.*

"It is the duty of the Christian magistrate to take order, that open blasphemy and idolatry, licentiousness and immorality, be suppressed, and that the church of Christ be supported throughout the commonwealth."—*Ib. p.* 106, 1*st ed.*

"We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them.

"7. That it is lawful for civil rulers to authorize the purchase and sale of any part of the human family, as slaves.

"8. That a constitution of government, which deprives unoffending men of liberty and property, is a moral institution, to be recognized as God's ordinance."—*Ib. p.* 108, 1*st ed.*

"We therefore condemn the following errors, and testify against, &c.

"2. That man has a right to worship God, whatever way conscience may dictate, although that way should be opposed to God's commandments.

"3. That any body of men may recognize such a right."—*Ib. p.* 85, 1*st ed.*

Again, errors testified against—

"4. That irreligious men may be appointed as the official administrators

ameliorating influence on this wretched population; and though it could not then remove, it curtailed the growing evil, and prepared the way for its complete extinction, so soon as *public opinion* without which legislation is *utterly unavailing*, should render such a measure at all practicable."—*Ibid. p.* 12.

"In proof of the *Christianity* of the United States of America, the following considerations are submitted—

"It is a principle which is well understood, at least in our own country, that, subordinate to the supreme legislator, all power is inherent in the people, and that *all free governments are founded on their authority.*

"Among these *reserved rights* may be enumerated that of worshipping God as *the individual may regard* consistent with his laws. And in the constitutions of all the members of the federal union, this right is guaranteed inalienably. If these rights of conscience, subject only to the law of God, *inhere originally in the people*, the power of regulating their exercise *must be delegated by the people* to their rulers, if they are possessed of it at all."

"The existence and value of both" (viz. religion and morality) "are admitted, and their exercise *guaranteed* in the constitution."

"We do not claim for it (the general government) perfection, any more than we do for ourselves, individually. But we do claim for our beloved country, the character of a Christian land, *whose institutions are worthy of recognition and active support.*"

"When with unprejudiced minds, we come to this examination of the federal constitution, we will find that *its whole spirit and letter is opposed to*

of the religious ordinance of swearing."—*Ib. p.* 97, 1*st ed.*

"The church may not recede from a more clear and particular testimony, to a more general and evasive one."—*Ib. p.* 119.

In the historical part of the Testimony, (as *published* in 1807, but *adopted* on the 15th of May, 1806, and duly certified by the organs of the highest judicatory then known in the church, and afterward approved and ratified by the synod, at its first session in 1809, in these words—

"The court then resolved, that all the acts passed by the Reformed Presbytery, be *recognized* and *ratified* by this synod."—*Published Minutes, p.* 41—)

The church declares its views, with regard to civil government in general—of the American government in particular—mentions some of its *acts*, and explains the reasons on which those acts were founded, explaining fully the application of the doctrinal parts, already quoted, to these United States.

"In the course of this session (May 106) *two acts* were passed by the presbytery, which are important, as containing *practical* directions for the *conduct* of individual members of the church—*an act* respecting giving oath, when summoned before the constituted authorities of the nation—and *an act* respecting *serving as jurors in courts of justice.*"—*Ref. Princ.* 1*st ed. p.* 133.

"Presbyterian covenanters, perceiving *immorality* interwoven with *the general* and the *states' constitutions* of government *in America*, have *uniformly dissented from the civil establishments.* Much as they loved *liberty*, they loved *religion more.*"—*Ib. p.* 134.

the principle and practice of slavery."—*Notes appended to Orig. Draft, pp.* 26, 27, 28, 29, 31.

"That instrument (the constitution) left the evil where it found it, in the slave-holding states themselves, and *they alone* are *responsible for its continuance.*"—*Ib. p.* 32.

As these brethren inform us that "the whole spirit and letter of the federal constitution is opposed to the principle and the practice of slavery," and that "it left the evil where it found it, in the slave-holding states themselves, and they alone are responsible for its continuance," we furnish the following extracts from the constitution, as approved by them, and, of course, a *modern opinion* among Covenanters.

"Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included in this union, according to their respective members, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of *free persons*, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, *three-fifths of all other persons.*"—*U. S. Con. art.* i. *sec.* 2.

That is, states shall have a representation proportioned to the number of slaves which they hold in bondage! Again:

"The congress shall have power to exercise *exclusive legislation, in all cases whatsoever*, over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular states, and the acceptance of congress, become the seat of government of the United States."—*Ib. art.* i. *sec.* 8.

That is, congress, composed of *representatives* from *all states in the union*,

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"Anxious not to impede the execution of justice, and yet to maintain a *consistent testimony*, they declare in that *act*, that an oath may be made before the *constituted authorities*, if these *authorities are given to understand* that *it is* IS NOT MADE AS A RECOGNITION OF THEIR OFFICIAL RIGHT OF ADMINISTRATION."—*Ref. Principles. 1st ed. p.* 135.

"Let it be *perfectly understood*, that the oath is an act of homage, performed *voluntarily* to the Supreme Being, and *by no means a recognition* of the magistrate's *authority*, or an *act of communion with him in his official* capacity."—*Ib. pp.* 135, 136.

"The *act* respecting *serving on juries, is absolutely prohibitory.*"

"There are moral evils *essential* to the *constitution* of the United States, which render it necessary *to refuse allegiance to the whole system.* In this remarkable instrument, there is contained no acknowledgment of the being or authority of God—there is no acknowledgment of the Christian religion, or professed submission to the kingdom of Messiah. It gives support to the enemies of the Redeemer, and admits to its honors and emoluments Jews, Mahometans, deists, and atheists. It establishes that system of rob-

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"have the exclusive legislation in all cases," in the District of Columbia, slavery not excepted.

Query. By what reasoning does it appear that Congress, or the representatives of all the states, are "*not responsible*" for slavery in the above district?

And again: "No person held to *service* or *labor* in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be *discharged* from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."—*U. S. Con. art.* iv. *sec.* 2.

This is the only article which binds a non-slave-holding state, to give up the runaway slave to the master. It is bound to do so, though in itself slavery is abolished.

Once more: "All treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land.—*Ib. art.* vi. *sec.* 2.

"The government of the United States *is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion.* It has, in itself, no character of enmity against the laws or religion of Mussulmen."—*Tripolitan Treaty, art.* xi. [*U. S. Laws, vol.* iv.

According to the above, it is the *supreme law of the land*, that this government is in *no sense* founded on the *Christian religion.* Yet say the Wylie men, "Since the commencement of Christianity, no government on earth has had a *fairer claim* to recognition as the *ordinance of God*, than that of these United States!"

"Political and ecclesiastical society are *essentially* different from each other

bery, by which men are held in slavery, despoiled of liberty, and property, and protection. It violates the principles of representation, by bestowing upon the domestic tyrant, who holds hundreds of his fellow creatures in bondage, an influence in making laws for freemen, proportioned to the number of his own slaves. This constitution is, notwithstanding its numerous excellencies, in many instances inconsistent, oppressive, and impious."

"Since the adoption of the constitution in the year 1789, the members of the Reformed Presbyterian church have maintained a constant testimony against these evils. They have refused to serve in any office which implies an approbation of the constitution, or which is placed under the direction of an immoral law. They have abstained from giving their votes at elections, for legislators or officers, who must be qualified to act by an *oath of allegiance to this immoral system.* They could not themselves consistently swear allegiance to that government, in the constitution of which there is contained *so much immorality.* In all these instances their *practice* has been *uniform.*"

"Some persons, however, who in other things profess an attachment to

in their nature, *government*, and *immediate ends.*"

"A careful inquiring into the subject, will show the government of the commonwealth, and that of the church, to differ in their origin, *object*, form, *end*, effect, subject, distinct exercise, and *immediate rule.*"—*Mc Master's Letters, p.* 7.

"*Mere defects* in *high* and *ultimate moral attainments*, if fundamental attributes be in conformity with and in nothing contrary to moral principle, will not render illegitimate a constitution of government."—*Ib. p.* 10.

"In perfect accordance with the last position, *it is held*, that *until a nation makes it so by its own deed*, the recognition of *no principle peculiar to the system of grace*, can be considered as *necessary* to *the validity* of its actual constitution, as *the moral ordinance of God.*"—*Ib. p.* 15.

"A happier destiny awaited our country. Heaven secured it by the *formation* and *adoption of the federal constitution*, in which, though imperfect, NO IMMORAL *principle is embraced*, nor immoral act enjoined; and, *under which*, a *condition* of society has arisen that is the admiration of patriots, and a MODEL to the nations." ! !—*Ib. p.* 67.

"In this land, *assuredly no church* has ever made the rejection of our civil institutions *a tessera* of fitness for her fellowship."—*Ib. p.* 68.

(The following *alteration* in the draught of a covenant, and *the reasonings* thereon, show that those who passed upon them, *adhere not* to the old principles of Covenanters, nor to the terms of communion, as recognized in the Reformed Presbyterian church. They strike out the follow-

reformation principles, have considered serving on juries as consistent with their testimony. In order to *expose* the inconsistency of this practice, the presbytery have determined at a convenient time to *publish a warning against it*—and in the mean time they deemed it expedient to *pass a prohibitory act.*"

"Jurors are executive officers, created by the constitution, and deriving from it all their power. They sit upon the bench of justice, as the ultimate tribunal, from whose verdict there is, in many instances, no appeal. They mingle together—the virtuous and the vicious, Christians and Infidels, the pious and the profane, in one sworn association. They incorporate with the national society, and in finding a verdict, represent the nation. They serve under the direction of constitutional courts, and are the constitutional judges of what is laid before them. The constitution itself is, in criminal cases, the supreme law, which they are bound upon oath to apply; and in civil cases the *bench* determines the law by which the *jury* is to be directed. The juror voluntarily places himself upon oath, under

ing paragraph in the *first* article of the oath.)

"Assured ourselves that this religion is, in agreeableness to the word of God, summarily set forth in the confessions and catechisms of the churches of the Reformation, and more especially and comprehensively, in the standards compiled by the assembly of divines at Westminster, England, with the aid of commissioners from the church of Scotland, for the furtherance of uniformity in doctrine, worship, church government, and discipline, among Christians in the British empire, and in all the nations."

(They furnish the following reasons for striking it out.)

"Now it is verily believed that there are many, both among ministers and private members, who have never read, or even seen, all 'the confessions and catechisms of the churches of the Reformation.' How then can any conscientious Covenanter declare on oath, 'I am assured that these documents, many of which I have never seen or heard, are agreeable to the word of God?' Surely such an act could not be performed with due intelligence.

"*Second.* Even the fact of the existence of the Westminster assembly, has been for several generations a matter merely of human history. The *faith* in such an event, can therefore be only *human.* But the faith of the members of the church of God, should rest upon divine testimony—on the record of God alone, and not on any human authority. Such a faith could not be that of God's elect.

"*Third.* There is an ambiguity in the sentence beginning with 'We accordingly *recognize* the faithful con-

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the direction of *a law which is immoral.* The Reformed Presbytery declare this practice inconsistent with their Testimony, and warn church members against serving on juries under the direction of the constituted courts of law."

"Presbyterian Covenanters, in consequence of *these two acts*, have no remaining difficulty about *the proper application* of the *principles of their Testimony.*"—*Ref. Princ. 1st ed. pp.* 136, 137, 138.

SCRIPTURE.

1 Cor. x. 31. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or *whatsoever ye do*, do all to the glory of God."

Prov. iii. 6. "In all thy ways *acknowledge him*, and he shall *direct thy paths.*"

2 Sam. xxiii. 3. "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, *he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*"

Prov. xxviii. 15. "As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people."

Ps. ii. 10—12. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

"Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

"Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."

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tendings of our predecessors for civil and religious freedom, and the *binding obligations of their* covenants, both national and solemn league, as originally *framed* and *sworn*, and at several times *renewed* in their true spirit and designs.' Here the *Covenanter* declares his recognition of the *binding obligation* of the covenants, both national and solemn league, as well as his *approbation* of the faithful contendings of the confessors of the Redeemer. This is all right. Yet that such deeds were ever transacted—that such covenants were ever entered into, has no other evidence than mere historical record, and, consequently, ought not to be made an article of the believer's faith."—*Appendix to the Minutes of the Eleventh-street Synod, pp.* 59, 60.

(In agreeableness with the above criticisms, they substitute the following article, in place of the above extracts from the covenant, as published in the form of overture.)

"*Regarding with all due respect*, so far as we know and understand them, the confessions and catechisms of the churches of the reformation, and more especially the more comprehensive standards, compiled by the assembly of divines, at Westminster, England, with the aid of commissioners from the church of Scotland, for the furtherance of uniformity in doctrine, worship, church government and discipline, among Christians in the British empire, and all the nations; we accordingly *highly appreciate* the faithful contendings of our predecessors for civil and religious freedom, the binding obligation of the covenants, national and solemn league, as originally framed and sworn, and after-

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"Matth. vii. 12. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."	wards renewed in their true spirit and designs.' And, even with these alterations, it will be observed that they *exclude it from the body of the covenant, and place it in the preamble.*

From the above quotations, it will appear to every impartial inquirer, that the *distinctive principles* of Covenanters are not maintained by Dr. Wylie and his colleagues. To make it appear somewhat more plainly, it is proposed to furnish a summary of the principal differences, as deducible from the above quotations. If any one asks, why have you not quoted from *their Testimony*, in place of extracting from the "Original draft," "McMaster's Letters on Civil Relations," and the published minutes of the Eleventh-street synod? To such it is replied, that *they have no testimony*, since they abandoned the only one known in the Reformed Presbyterian church in America.

According to the quotations already furnished, it appears that there are some important differences between the party adhering to Dr. Wylie and the Reformed Presbyterian church.

1. The Confession of Faith, the Larger Catechism, and Reformation principles, teach that the civil magistrate is "bound to suppress blasphemy and heresy—to oppose all false worship—to remove it, and all the monuments of idolatry." As also, that the Scriptures are "the *only rule*" to direct him and others in glorifying God.

Dr. Wylie and his associate writers seem to think otherwise, as they justify the American government in leaving religion to the conscience of every man; and protecting the [illegible] Christian and Unitarian to the full extent of the true worshipper of Jesus Christ: and of the Bible, as the standard of human legislation, on the ground that civil government is founded on *the law of nature*, and not on revealed religion. Query. *What is* the law of nature, and *wherein* does it *differ* from the *revealed will* of God, so far as *He* teaches concerning magistracy? Thorburn, Reid, and Steven—all *true Covenanters*—and our standards, would say, *they are the same*, and would distinguish between *the light of nature* and the *law of nature.*

2. The book entitled "Reformation Principles," teaches that a government which authorizes false religion, or deprives the subject of civil liberty, is not the ordinance of God, nor even a moral institution—that the American government is guilty of these, and other heinous sins, and is, therefore, *not the moral ordinance of God.*

Dr. Wylie and his associates teach otherwise, both from the pulpit and the press, and justify an incorporation with the general government of the United States.

3. "Reformation principles" condemn slavery, and the American government for supporting and encouraging it, and therefore "refuse allegiance to

the whole system." Dr. Wylie and his companions *apologize for the iniquity* of the commonwealth, and represent it as an evil that has been forced upon the nation, and that was unavoidable—that it has been using the utmost efforts to get slavery removed, and is not accountable for its existence or continuance.

4. The Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian church declares that its members may not incorporate with the government by voting, sitting on juries, or swearing oaths of allegiance to the government, because it is immoral in its very constitution. Dr. Wylie and his *party* oppose this *in theory*, and many of them *in practice*—and even go so far as to deny that ever the church legislated upon it so as to prohibit her members from voting, sitting on juries, swearing oaths of allegiance, or incorporating with the government!

5. Covenanters have always believed in *the binding obligation* of the ecclesiastical and civil covenants of our fathers, "in so far as they were not peculiar to the church in the British isles," and have said so explicitly, in their "*terms of communion*." Hear their own words: "An acknowledgment that public covenanting is an ordinance of God, to be observed by churches and nations under the New Testament dispensation—and that those vows, namely, that which was entered into by the church and kingdom of Scotland, called the NATIONAL COVENANT, and that which was afterwards entered into by the three kingdoms, Scotland, England, and Ireland, and by the Reformed churches in those kingdoms, usually called the Solemn League and Covenant, were entered into in the true spirit of that institution—and that the *obligation* of these covenants extends *to those who were represented in the taking of them, although removed to this or any other part of the world*, in so far as they bind to duties *not peculiar to the church in the British isles*, but *applicable in all lands*."

The fifth query to be put to ruling elders, and ministers at their ordination, declares the same sentiment in unequivocal language.

That Dr. Wylie and his adherents do not maintain our sentiments on covenanting, will appear from the following considerations:

1. They *alter* the expressions contained in the second paragraph of the oath, or covenant, as it passed the synods of Scotland, Ireland, and America, in the form of overture; and, instead of "assured, ourselves, that this religion is, in agreeableness to the word of God, summarily set forth in the confessions and catechisms," &c. they say, "Regarding with all due respect, so far as we know and understand them, the confessions," &c. And again, instead of "we accordingly *recognize* the faithful contendings," &c. they say, "we accordingly *highly appreciate* the faithful contendings," &c.

2. They *transpose it*, (even with these alterations,) and *put it out of the oath, into the preamble of the covenant*, showing that they are not disposed to *bind themselves*, or *consider themselves bound* to creeds, confessions, and catechisms.

3. They, in both the above cases, neglect to follow the example of our godly fathers, who both recognized the *descending obligation* of the covenants, and also embodied a reference to the confessions and catechisms, in the oath itself—not in the preamble. This conduct of Dr. Wylie's party, in synodical

capacity, must open the eyes of all Covenanters in Europe and America, who are not *wilfully blinded*, to see that in *spirit*, as well as in the forms of church order, they have gone out from the communion of the Reformed Presbyterian church.

On this important document (the draught of a covenant) a few thoughts are offered, as it, more fully than any document of theirs, marks the difference between them and the Reformed Presbyterian church.

1. This document was originally got up in America, and written by one of the American ministers. The *avowed design*, as stated in Pittsburgh, when first read in court, was, that it was designed to be a bond of union to *all the churches*—not a bond for the peculiar use of the Reformed Presbyterians in Europe and America, but for *all other churches* which might see cause to accede thereto. This object in view, it behoved to have a *general character*, or it would not accomplish the desired object. The old covenants of our fathers, were *too pointed* and *specific*. Men who did not believe our principles, could not swear them. This *latitudinarian covenant* might accomplish an object so desirable as entering into a mutual bond, even when we did not agree in a number of important principles. It was to accomplish this design, that the clause was introduced which has given so much offence to many of the brethren, viz. "We shall inquire diligently what part conforms most to the Holy Scriptures, *take our stand* in that communion which is found most pure," &c.

2. This covenant was evidently intended to be *a substitute* for all the old covenants, referred to in our "Terms of Ecclesiastical Communion," if not in place of the "Terms" themselves. This will probably appear from the following considerations.

As we have seen already, the draught, as it returned from Europe, recognized, and expressly asserted, in the body of the covenant, the *binding obligation* of the *ancient covenants of our fathers;* but this instrument, as it leaves Eleventh-street church, Dr. Wylie, and his ecclesiastical friends, neither *directly* nor *indirectly* acknowledges such binding and descending obligation, on Covenanters *in America;* and this seems the more strange, considering that such obligation is expressly stated in the "Terms of Communion."

To ascertain the truth of this charge, let us turn again to the document. In the oath there is not one syllable concerning the confessions, catechisms, or former covenants. They are all thrust *out of the oath*. Reference is had to them in a *preamble*, which forms *no part* of the oath. This was deliberately and *designedly* done; for it was formerly the first article in the bond, and they even *attempt at reasoning* the propriety of excluding it.

Besides, it would not suit to retain it as it was, as to verbiage; for then, though not *sworn*, (as it could not be, not being *in* the covenant,) it would express the binding and descending obligation upon the descendants of Covenanters, even if removed to America, or elsewhere. Instead of using the forcible language of the draught, as it returned from the brethren in Europe, they say, (in the preamble) "Regarding with all *due* respect." They do not tell us *how much* respect is due; whether as much as is due to their own *ecclesiastical standing*, respect for church order, and veracity of the statements made in their minutes and appendix; or as is due to documents to which they

are *solemnly bound* by the oath of God, at every communion. As to the contending of the predecessors, they tell us they "highly appreciate," instead of "we accordingly recognize," the original language of the document. Highly appreciate what? "The faithful contendings of our predecessors, for civil and religious freedom, and the binding obligation of the covenants, national and solemn league, as originally sworn," &c.

They do not tell us a single word of *recognizing*, but only *appreciating highly!* Not a word about American Covenanters being under any binding obligation, in relation to the covenants specified; but simply that they highly appreciate the binding obligation upon somebody; and even *that* they are not disposed *to swear*, which is at least one evidence of remaining honesty.

But they tell us why they will not swear to the maintenance of the above documents. "It has been, for several generations, a matter merely of human history—the fact of the existence of the Westminster assembly." It is a bad thing to commence doubting. These men commenced doubting about the propriety of some of the distinctive principles of covenanters—soon they doubted whether any acts had been passed in relation to the doubtful matters—and afterwards they became fully satisfied that there had "never been any legislation upon the subject." They have begun to doubt the existence of the Westminster assembly, and the Confession of Faith and catechisms which they prepared; the covenants referred to in the book called the Confession of Faith, are also doubtful, as "they have been for several generations a matter of human history"—and another year may bring the doubting brethren to a firm conclusion that there were no Westminster divines—no catechisms—no covenants!

If they cannot consistently admit into the oath an article recognizing these documents, because that they ever have been framed and taken by certain persons, "has been a matter merely of human history," it is evident that they cannot consider themselves bound by them—and equally evident, that as they are explicitly recognized in all their binding obligation upon Covenanters in America and elsewhere, as stated in our "Terms of Communion;" and as these are recognized in all the solemnity of our sacramental communion, that they are about to abandon those terms, and substitute the new draught, when it shall become a covenant, in place of our terms, as now employed. But,

3. There is considerable evidence that they have no disposition to enter into this modern covenant. No, not into this remodelled document; and and that the principal object in all these late alterations is to gain time—to put off the period of covenanting with God.

The draught has been under consideration in the synods in Ireland, Scotland, and America, since August 8, 1823, when it was first read by Dr. McLeod in synod. It has now been in progress better than ten years, and the day of entering into it seems more distant than that on which it was first read. Our brethren in Europe never can consent to enter into such a covenant as it now is, and the Wylie synod, no doubt, so judges. It appears that it is ordered back, with the amendments, (mutilations) to the European synods. That will occupy two years at least, as the synod in America meets biennially—new comments and changes will of course be proposed, which will occupy attention in America. Perhaps some more *mutilations* will be proposed,

or additions. If not, still it will have to go back. This will spend at least two years more; and the truth is, there is no reasonable calculation when it might pass. It is very obvious that the design was to gain time, or to put off covenanting. ("Injudicious ligatures," as the Eleventh-street men call covenants, p. 59, Appendix.) Their own language seems to justify our opinion, that they are not anxious to enter into their own covenant. Say they, p. 59, Appendix, "Whether the present time be one which calls on our church to engage in this duty, your committee pretend not to determine. They believe, however, that the signs of the times do indicate the necessity of great caution and deliberation, on a point so important, calculated, as it will of course be, to *fix* and *settle*, at least for a time, the complexion and character of our church." They *doubt* of the propriety of covenanting at this time—and they are not disposed to have the church *fixed* and *settled*. They have manifested the truth of this, in most of their ecclesiastical conduct, for nearly two years, as the foregoing part of this essay clearly shows; but much to destroy every thing that was considered *fixed* and *settled*, among Reformed Presbyterians. They really do tell some truth, even in this wretched appendix. They say that they doubt the propriety of having the church *fixed* and *settled*, even "for *a time*."

4. It is a remarkable fact, that in this singular document their is no recognition of any descending obligation upon posterity. It is to terminate, for any thing we can perceive, upon the actual Covenanters. This is in perfect keeping with the exclusion of the subordinate standards from the covenant, and placing the reference to them in a preamble, which is in direct opposition to both the "National Covenant," and "Solemn League and Covenant."

5. Their very singular reasons for rejecting a reference to the Westminster Confession, Catechisms, and the Covenants, demand a slight notice.

The first reason they give for rejecting "the faithful contendings of our predecessors," and "the binding obligation of their covenants," is, "that such deeds were ever transacted—that such covenants were ever entered into, has no other evidence than mere historical record, and, consequently, ought not to be made an article of the believer's faith."

The second is, that because in the "Solemn League and Covenant," there is not such a reference to acts of parliament as in the "National Covenant"—therefore, the Wylie synod are "strictly following the path which they (those who framed the solemn league,) had the *honor* to indicate."

To this profound reasoning we remark, first, that upon this principle they indirectly condemn both the national covenant, and solemn league and covenant; for *they* refer to the standards of the church—they are sworn to in the very body of the instruments. Second: that they cannot consider themselves bound by covenant, to our "Terms of Communion," and other standards, for they have "direct reference to these documents, for the existence of which we have mere historical record." Third: they confound *saving faith*, and the evidence on which it is founded, with the faith employed in relation to an ecclesiastical instrument, and the evidence necessary to convince any man of common sense, concerning the instrument, and those by whom it was *framed* and *sworn*; which is singularly *ignorant management*, unworthy of a respectable deist. They pretend to hold it doubtful whether ever there were Wost-

minster divines—a Westminster assembly—a Confession of Faith—catechisms—covenants—and persons faithfully contending for them! Forsooth! they have "only human testimony—mere historical record."! True, they have the documents—have compared them with the word of God—entered into the church on a profession of their belief in them—often communed in a full profession of them, as to their truth and binding obligation—yet, as they have now only "human testimony" about them, they must be discarded from their new covenant.!

According to this modern reasoning concerning the faith to be exercised in relation to public documents, and the evidence necessary to attest their authenticity, the church, and writers of systems of divinity, have all been in error, in drawing upon *human testimony*, to convince gainsayers. Brown, Boston, Ridgely, Paley, and others, have all availed themselves of human testimony, to establish facts, and confound opponents who refused the testimony of Scripture.

Suppose the authenticity of the Old Testament was denied, and it was asserted that there were no such persons as Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, or Ezekiel; nor such works as those that pass under their names; that the works were not received in ancient times; would not any intelligent man pursue a course of reasoning from *human testimony*, to establish the facts? If the question of the soundness of the writings, or sentiment, was disputed, would they not view it as a totally different question, and requiring different testimony? In like manner, "human testimony," and human testimony *alone*, would be sought for to establish *the authenticity* of confessions, catechisms, and covenants. Were the question concerning *the truth of the doctrines* contained therein, then there would be an appeal to *divine testimony*, or the Scriptures, to settle that question; but it would be rather a ludicrous proceeding to call for divine testimony to prove that there ever sat an assembly of divines at Westminster, who framed a confession of faith—or that there were two covenants made in the British Island, called the National Covenant, and the Solemn League and Covenant—or that these were sworn to by the church and nation; yet true it is, that the formal reason for rejecting a recognition of the covenants, confessions, &c., is because we have not divine testimony that they were ever framed or sworn: or, what is the same thing, that "we have nothing but human testimony."

After all, is this the true reason for rejecting them? We think not. The meaning of these ecclesiastics seems to be, that they have nothing more than *human testimony* as to the *orthodoxy* of the documents, and therefore they cannot swear them. In other words, they neither *believe all the doctrines* contained in the standards referred to, nor do they believe themselves to have any thing to do with the covenants, as binding in America.

It is believed that there is not an intelligent man on earth, whether Christian or deist, that knows any thing of the history of Scotland, that has the slightest doubt of the existence of the above documents. The Wylie synod know, as well as they know any other fact, that there was a Westminster assembly; that they, along with commissioners from Scotland, prepared a confession of faith, and catechisms; that the national covenant, and solemn league and covenant, were made and sworn; that the Reformed Presbyterian church

has always considered them binding upon it, in so far as they refer to moral duties not peculiar to the church in the British isles; and *no man can believe* that the reason of casting the acknowledgment of them out of the draft is, because they need other than human testimony to convince them. Every intelligent person must come to the conclusion, that the true reason is, because they do not believe the documents. It is not yet the time for them to come out in an open, *honest denial* of them. That time will soon come, as their movements have, of late years, been exceedingly rapid, and, as we believe, the more rapid because it has been a downward course. It is not three years since the very leaders of that faction treated as *a slander* the report that any of their members sat on juries, voted at elections, or held a magistrate's office. But now they glory in their liberties, and with an impertinence, equalled only by its falsehood, assert that the Reformed Presbyterian church has never legislated on the subject, so as to prohibit its members from sitting on juries, &c.

But again, this argument of theirs must cut off the possibility of their covenant ever being taken either by themselves or others; for that there ever was an assemblage of ministers and elders in Eleventh-street, Philadelphia, in August, 1833—that they had a draft of a covenant before them—that they made alterations in it, and then passed it for transmission to the European synods—that there ever was such a man as Mr. Crawford in the moderator's chair—such men present as Drs. Black, McMaster, and Wylie, are all matters of "human testimony, and not sufficient for the faith of God's people to rest upon: such a faith could not be that of God's elect!" The Bible does not mention *them*, or their transactions, any more than it does the assembly of divines at Westminster, or the confession, or catechisms, or covenants, except it be under the general description of backsliders. "The backslider in heart, shall be filled with his own way." Perhaps, in addition to this, there is as little evidence of the orthodoxy of the *modern covenant*, as of that of the confession, catechisms, and ancient covenants.

Fourth; because the solemn league and covenant does not particularly quote the acts of Parliament, (*though it does explicitly refer to the standards of the church, and attainments of the reformation,*) therefore the Eleventh-street ecclesiastics are acting according to the example set them by the ancient fathers! That is, because the standards *are referred to* in the solemn league; therefore, these modern reformers, in *neglecting to refer to them*, "are strictly following the path which the former had the *honor* to indicate."

6. This modern covenant, taken in connection with the comments and alterations made by themselves, is in direct opposition to five of the queries put to ministers at their ordination, in the Reformed Presbyterian church, solemnly taken by these ministers at their ordination, and, consequently, totally opposed to their own solemn vows.

This is a heavy charge, and requires to be confirmed by indubitable testimony. Unpleasant as it is to do this, or have it to do, it shall be essayed.

The 2d, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 9th queries, are referred to as demonstrating the truth of the above allegation.

II. "Do you sincerely *own* the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, catechisms, larger and shorter, as these were received by the church of Scotland?"

IV. "Do you acknowledge the morality of solemn covenanting, both personal and social, private and public, in New Testament times, and that such moral covenants, whether civil or ecclesiastical, as *recognize posterity*, are binding upon those represented in the taking of them, as well as upon the actual covenanters?"

V. "Do you believe that the *national* covenant of Scotland, and the solemn league and covenant of Scotland, England, and Ireland, were entered into agreeably to the spirit of this permanent institution, and, from the unity of the Christian church, that these engagements, divested of any thing peculiar to the British isles, are still *binding* upon the Reformed church in *every land?*"

VI. "Do you approve of the Declaration and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian church in North America, and of *the faithful contendings of the confessors* and martyrs of Jesus, in former ages, against Paganism, Popery, and Prelacy; and also of the Testimony of the Reformed Covenanted church, in Britain and Ireland, in behalf of *all the attainments of* the Reformation?"

IX. "Do you promise subjection to this presbytery, and to the superior judicatories of *this church* in the Lord, and engage to follow no divisive courses from the doctrine and order which the church has solemnly recognized and adopted?"

The above queries form part of a *solemn covenant*, made with the presbytery, and the whole church, on the day of ordination. No man, with us, can be ordained to the office of the holy ministry, without giving an unqualified assent to them. It is, and always has been, considered by our church as a most solemn covenant with God and his people. These men have thus engaged, and they know it. Lest they should say, we still adhere to them, and thus impose upon the unsuspecting, a few thoughts are herewith suggested.

1. The second query, as above quoted, calls upon the candidate to "*sincerely own* the doctrines contained in the Westminster confessions and catechisms, as received by the church of Scotland." But say these men, (p. 59, appendix) "Even the fact of the existence of the Westminster assembly, has been for several generations a matter *merely of human history.*" Therefore, what? The following should be (and is) stricken from the covenant—"Assured, ourselves, that this religion is, in agreeableness to the word of God, summarily set forth in the confessions and catechisms of the Reformation, and more especially and comprehensively *in the standards compiled by the assembly of divines at Westminster, with the aid of commissioners from the church of Scotland*," &c. This may pass well enough with these men, rather than *want ordination:* but when a covenant is to be framed, it may not be admitted, because "for several generations it has been a matter of merely human history, that there was a Westminster assembly."! True, they have *owned* these; *sincerely owned* them; and *pledged themselves* as to a *belief* of the fact and the truth—and these are engrossed in the ancient covenants, recognized as binding in a subsequent query, but it must be put out of the covenant, because no "conscientious Covenanter could declare this belief upon oath."!

2. The fourth query, to which they have also solemnly bound their souls, says that moral covenants are *binding* upon those *represented* in the taking of them, as well as upon *the actual Covenanters.*

The fifth query specifies the covenants referred to in the terms, viz: "the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England, and Ireland" and "from the *unity of the Christian church*, that *these engagements*, divested of any thing *peculiar* to the British isles, are *still binding upon the Reformed church in every land*." Formerly these men solemnly engaged to this; but now, a covenant is to be framed and sworn, at a time when "*the church is advancing with accelerated motion*," and it is not expedient "to retard her *vital current*, by an *undue compression*, arising from the *application* of *injudicious ligatures*."!! No violence is done to the opinions of Eleventh-street synod, by the above quotation. It contains their own sentiments, and was employed by them for the express purpose of justifying them in rejecting the first article, or section of the covenant, and fixing it in a preamble; which article, as it formerly stood, bound to maintain the standards, confessions, catechisms, and covenants.

3. The sixth query calls for "an approbation of the Declaration and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian church in North America, and of *the faithful contendings* of the confessors and martyrs of Jesus, *in former ages*." Though pledged to this at ordination, as well as at every communion, (according to the 5th term,) yet the allusion to "*the faithful contendings*" must be stricken from the covenant; for this profound reason, "that *such deeds were ever transacted*, that *such covenants* were *ever entered into*, has *no other evidence* than mere *historical* record."

Perhaps they will tell us that it is a mere omission, (as they tell us about the American federal constitution, in omitting to acknowledge God, his Son, and his law;) but it will be borne in memory, that it is a designed omission, upon the part of these quondam brethren—that they have attempted to reason themselves and others into a belief, that it was right to omit the introduction—as also that they actually put it out of the draught, as it came from the brethren in Europe—and perhaps some will believe that *omission* of duty is not always a *little sin*. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha"—a text which does not say, *hate the Lord Jesus Christ*, but speaks directly concerning an omission of duty.

4. The ninth query calls for a promise, upon the part of the candidate, that he "will follow no *divisive courses*, from the *doctrine* and *order* which the church has solemnly *recognized* and *adopted*."

But the church has *sanctioned*, and *made her own*, these old documents called *Confessions*, *Catechisms*, and *Covenants*—she has embodied them in her ancient covenants, her testimony, terms of communion, confession of faith, and queries to be put to ministers and ruling elders, at ordination. Persons are called to give their assent to them, before admission to the privileges of the church; and parents have to recognize them, and engage to the maintenance of them, when presenting their children for baptism. Yet, in violation of all this *doctrine* and *order*, the men who have been industriously employed in *mutilating* the draught of a covenant, have cast them out as unprofitable and inexpedient, on the flimsy pretext that "*The fact of the existence of the Westminster assembly, has been for several generations a matter merely of human history*"—and "*that such deeds were ever transacted—that such covenants were ever entered into, has no other evidence than mere historical record.*"

Review of some of the Principal Statements made by the Party adhering to Dr. Wylie.

Under this head it is not proposed to enter into a minute examination of all the misstatements and falsehoods of their late minutes and appendix; for in the appendix there is little truth, in fact or in form.

In this appendix, No. 1 purports to be a "*Proposed Plan of Harmony.*" Every reader of the document would take it for granted, that it had been proposed to the brethren of the eastern section of the church, with whom they were at variance; or, at least, that it had been proposed to the brethren who met in Cherry-street; but there is nothing farther from the fact. Such proposals *were never made* to *all*, or any *of them*. Messrs. S. Wylie, Guthrie, and Hogue, called upon some of the western brethren, in Mr. Bradford's, Philadelphia, inviting them to a secret conference, in the house of Mr. Sterling. They said they were authorized to do so, and that *none of the eastern members* were expected, or wished to attend; intimating that it was to consult what course to pursue, at the approaching meeting. This was stated publicly, in presence of, and to most of the eastern members, who were present.

This paper, No. 1, or something of the kind, was laid before the Western members, by Dr. Black. If there was any disposition for *harmony*, why not either call them to the caucus in Mr. Sterling's, or state the proposals publicly, at the meeting held in Cherry-street, which met at the suggestion of Messrs. Kell and H. McMillan? Say the "plan of harmony" had been equitable, consistent with truth and church order, and perfectly reasonable and scriptural—yet, let it be remembered that *it was never proposed!!* Therefore publishing it as a "proposed plan of harmony," is, to say the least, a piece of chicanery. Had it been proposed, it were an easy matter to have shown *the injustice*, *inconsistency*, and *unreasonableness* of some of the proposals.

Document No. 2, is said to be a "report of the eastern synod's committee, on the pro-re-nata." Our readers are doubtless aware, that by "eastern synod," they do not mean the synod which sat in Chambers-street church, of which Rev. William Gibson was the moderator; but that one which met in Waverly Place, which transacted business *without constitution*. That is, that left the synod, which they themselves had acknowledged, because Mr. Chrystie was chosen clerk, and went to another church, and proceeded to transact business *without even opening by prayer*, *in the name of the Lord Jesus*. This being understood, we propose to offer a few remarks on their profound reasons against the legality of the pro-re-nata of November 21, 1832.

Their first reason is—"There did not exist a single condition, in this case, demanding the call of a pro-re-nata." Should we admit, (which we do not,) that not a single condition existed, demanding the call—that these men were *disinterested* and *competent judges* of the propriety of such call, yet were they the *legal judges*, before they met in court, on the call of the moderator? From standard works we have already shown, in a previous part of the essay, that the moderator was the sole judge of when it was necessary to convene the members; and that he did so, at all times, upon his own responsibility.

Under this position, they offer the most plausible argument in their posses-

sion. "Synod, six months before the *pro-re-nata* call, were in full possession of all this—(viz. the sentiments of the original draught)—a majority united then in the views it contained, and the court solemnly averred the soundness of our faith in the standards of the church." They refer to the following expressions in the draught—"We are assured that the ministers and people of our churches continue unanimous in their religious principles. On these grand fundamental topics they are of one heart and mind. There is no relinquishment of any doctrine, for which the martyrs bled and died. All believe and teach the same principles as contained in our subordinate standards, exhibiting a summary of Scripture truth."

However plausible this statement is, yet the answer is perfectly easy, and should be satisfactory. (1.) All did not vote for the above extract. Some both spoke and voted against it. (2.) Some did not vote either for or against it, not having sufficient evidence of Dr. Wylie's change. The Dr. and his adherents had not then come fully out—and though they were strongly *suspected*, yet few dared to say that they had abandoned the standards. (3.) The introduction of the pastoral address, in its original form, was viewed rather as an experiment, to try the orthodoxy of our members. No idea was entertained that it would be persisted in—and certainly as little that there would be an addition of offensive matter. (4.) On a mere hearing of it read, no person could see its peculiarly odious sentiments and style, as when laid before him in print. If, therefore, they then thought Dr. Wylie and his friends orthodox, and said they thought so, it was a sin of *ignorance*, arising from a *false charity*. They could not *conscientiously* say so now.

Their second position is, that "*the synod did not meet*"—(viz. in pro-re-nata.) That "part of the two presbyteries, which were said to have requested the pro-re-nata, met. The other presbyteries did not meet. One of them, the oldest, expressed his convictions previously to, and at the meeting, of its illegality."

It is exceedingly hard to have to say that professors of religion, and ministers of the sanctuary, will deliberately tell what they surely must know *is not true*. Self-defence compels the writer of this document to declare that the above quotation *is all false*. Two *entire* presbyteries met, and two ministers, with two ruling elders, out of a third presbytery. The writers of the review of the pro-re-nata, know this. As to the Rev. W. Gibson, (the oldest member,) he did not express his conviction of the illegality of the pro-re-nata synod, either *before*, or at the meeting. When will these quondam brethren cease to slander a poor old man, who has spent his whole life in upholding the covenanted cause?—has been ever surrounded with hardships, and is now near *eighty years of age?* Why not be content with slandering the junior members? Is it possible that he, by his circular, convened the members, assigning the reasons for calling them, presiding in the sessions of the court, and yet professed his conviction of its illegality? It is well known that *some* men have secretly attempted to practice upon the old gentleman, under the pretext of friendship, and might have induced him to say things without due reflection; but the foregoing statement we throw back upon them as a base fabrication—a notorious untruth. When the irregular protests were introduced, he was at first non-plussed. But this was not from any conviction that

the protests were regular, or that the meeting was illegal. He knew the reverse; but he saw the spirit of the absentees, and feared, what has since taken place, that they were about to become fugitives from discipline, and rend the Reformed Presbyterian church.

The reproach attempted to be thrown upon Rev. David Scott, in the same paragraph, must return upon the unprincipled persons who made it. The amount of his offending is, that he obeyed the summons of the moderator, when duly cited—has not yet obtained a pastoral settlement—and has labored with diligence and fidelity, both in Europe and America; while of the Wylie synod, their present moderator left his congregation, without even giving them notice of his intention to do so—not for the purpose of laboring in the vacancies, or in a settled congregation, but to teach school in Philadelphia. Their statement in the same paragraph is not true, that "*a majority of synod did not meet.*" A majority did meet. But if they had not, it could neither have affected the legality of the moderator's call, nor of the transactions of those who were quite sufficient to form a quorum.

Their third argument, against the pro-re-nata and its proceedings, is, that "the publication of the original draught of the address, could not, in itself, be criminal. It was a part of our minutes, and, as such, was authorized by synod to be published." They add, "We have various precedents before us"—and state the precedents to which they refer—Dr. McLeod's address in support of the rejected articles of correspondence—Dr. Willson's threat to publish his paper on our civil relations—and Mr. Jefferson's publication of the original draught of the declaration of independence. And to fortify their position, assert, "it was considered too as a portion of those *free discussions* authorized by general synod." To these assertions we reply—

1. That the rejected portion of the address formed *no part of our minutes.* It was rejected altogether. Perhaps the authority of Dr. McLeod is worth something with these men. He viewed the matter in the light we do. The evidence of this is, that when he published the minutes and the address in the Expositor, *he left out the whole of the rejected sections.* Why did he not publish them, since they belonged to the free discussions, and his magazine was the organ through which they were to be conducted? If they belonged to the minutes, Dr. McLeod must have neglected an important duty. But he knew better. He had yet to learn, that articles which were rejected, formed a part of the minutes.

2. There is not one precedent can be furnished, to justify the publication of the rejected pastoral, and the notes appended. Dr. McLeod's case has no bearing upon it, either less or more.

The paper which he read concerning the correspondence, was never offered as the report of the committee, but as his own. Besides, the articles of correspondence were the subject of judicial investigation, not his written argument in their defence. Moreover, the Dr.'s conduct, in afterward publishing, was never judicially approved. If the Dr.'s paper had been offered as the report of the joint committee, or of a minority of synod—if his address had been the subject of judicial investigation, instead of the articles of correspondence—and if the conduct of the Dr. in publishing had been judicially approved, it might be plead as a precedent, but not till then.

Dr. Willson's case has nothing to do with it. For, first: he did *not publish* the report at all, either as his own, or that of the committee. And, second; its sentiments were *professedly approved* by all the members present. The only objection made, was on the ground of inexpediency.

Mr. Jefferson's publication of the original draught of the declaration of independence, can have no bearing upon the subject. For, first; there were no civil authorities had control over the matter. They did not, and could not prohibit the publication. Second; there was no constitution *violated*, or *to be violated*, by such document. Not so in the church. Its very constitutional principles, and distinctive standing, were impugned by this "pastoral and notes." And, third; it was not an ecclesiastical transaction. As well might one plead, that because in the reign of Charles II. ministers were put into congregations by patronage, and forced into the pulpits of the worshippers, contrary to the wishes of the people, therefore, on the 14th of January, 1833, a minister might be forced upon the majority of a congregation in New York, by the aid of city marshalls. Surely there were abundance of precedents during the reign of Charles II!

3. It could *not* be "considered as a portion of the free discussions authorized by synod." Did the act in relation to free discussions, justify an attack upon personal character?—reproach of a ministerial brother, as deranged?—teaching doctrines contrary to the laws and usages of the church?—violating the acts of the inferior judicatories, in relation to documents laid upon their tables, by individuals or committees, and prohibiting such documents to be sent out among the people?—and to adopt another medium of communication, besides that appointed by synod? (viz. the American Christian Expositor, which was under the direction of a man in whom the synod had confidence)—and, in fine, did they contemplate a license given to their ministers, to teach, print, and circulate heresies, in opposition to their standards; and that even after they had been rejected by the inferior courts of judicature? If not, then the argument passes for nothing—precisely what it is worth.

Their *fourth* argument is, that "the call of the pro-re-nata was illegal, because it was indefinite—it covered all the business of synod, under the designation of 'such other business as may come before the court.' Such a provision rendered the call illegal, and admonished the UPRIGHT members of synod not to attend."

Suppose that certain specifications in the moderator's circular, referred to business that could not be transacted in pro-re-nata, it is inconceivable how that could invalidate the moderator's authority to convene the members. When they met on this call, he was accountable to synod for every item in the circular. Again, on what principle can the expression, "such other business as may come before the court," make the call of the meeting illegal? If nothing but what is specified, *may* come before the court, the moderator should have known it; but he might *possibly* think that other things, that necessarily grew out of the specifications, or that might affect the very business on which the synod met, would necessarily claim attention; and if he was in error, why did not these "upright members" attend, and confine him to his own specifications in the circular? It is idle to say that they could not, for

many of them appeared in New York, shortly after, with far greater inconvenience, and on unlawful business.

In the *fifth* place, they tell us that "the call of the pro-re-nata deserved to be disregarded, and ought to be considered void, because of the false representation upon the front of one of the specified reasons, viz. 'for publishing the erroneous and condemned part of a pastoral address.' That any part of the address was erroneous, is an assumption without proof." And again, "to decide upon the sentiments, belonged to the supreme judicatory, and not to the inferior court."

A few questions upon the above statement, may not be improper. Did the original draught come before synod, for its adoption? If it did, was it adopted as read, or were there not several paragraphs rejected? If any part of it was rejected, on what principle was it refused? Was it because the synod *approved* of the sentiments, and the vituperation of character contained therein? Did the members say so, on the floor of synod? Do the minutes say so, even as published in the Expositor?

The truth is, that a considerable portion was rejected, some of the members publicly declaring that the sentiments were not true, and that there was an abuse of character. The address was condemned as to the sections ordered to be expunged.

But the inferior court had no right to decide upon the orthodoxy of the report of one of its committees, or the publications of its individual members!! This is *new light*, with a witness. One time these gentlemen inform us that the superior court has no original jurisdiction—the offender should *be sent down* to his own presbytery, to be tried by his peers—at another time, he must *be sent up* higher, to a court having original jurisdiction! When presbyteries and synods have no right to judge of the errors and slanders of their members, it is high time they were set aside as useless.

They furnish a *sixth* item of information, concerning the pro-re-nata, viz. "the call and meeting of the pro-re-nata were *disorderly* and *illegal*, as well as *intermeddling*, in the case of Dr. Wylie."

That is, the call and meeting were illegal, disorderly and intermeddling, because one item in the circular was, to take order in a case of fama clamosa, against Dr. Wylie. They go on to state, that "the representation of his *voting at an election*, was founded on the *loose statement* of a party newspaper, in the heat of an election canvass," &c.—and they represent the conduct of those who thought the subject deserving investigation, as very infamous—"The wretched state of mind that could thus trifle with character," &c., say they, p. 16, app.

Say Dr. Wylie had not violated the law and order of the church—had not voted at the election, *while yet an alien*, (which we are authorized to state that he did, as can be proved by his own intimate friends, and others,) yet we have to learn how the call or meeting became invalidated, by one of the items in the call not being afterward substantiated. If *every item* in the moderator's circular, was afterward discovered to exist *only in fama clamosa*, and, upon investigation, to be destitute of truth, yet the moderator might be sustained, and even commended for calling the meeting, and specifying the reasons, for as much as they actually existed in fama clamosa. But, if he should

not have been sustained, why were not these men forward to have the aged moderator laid under ban? It is astonishing that they denied themselves the pleasure of exposing and censuring him, especially when they found it so *perfectly convenient*, shortly afterward, to visit New York, meeting with no hindrance from "bad roads—unpleasant weather—lateness of the season—or want of holidays."?

A *seventh* plea against the pro-re-nata is, "the business into which it was proposed to enter, was not unforeseen; every thought of the address and notes had been uttered upon the floor of synod; the business, in the first instance, belonged to the sessions and the presbyteries to which the members respectively belonged, and not to the superior judicatory; over the main subject, the subordinate synod had not jurisdiction, it being before the general synod."

It is admitted that *personal abuse* was poured upon the junior, and on one of the senior members of the synod, during its sessions; but this had been a common occurrence for several years. The brethren submitted to it while it was confined to the floor of synod or presbytery; but when they were held up to the scorn and sneer of the infidel, in a rebellious publication, it became them to see to their rights. It is not true, however, that "every thought of the address and notes had been uttered on the floor of synod. No man stated on the floor of synod, that Dr. Willson was deranged, and no man dared to do it there, at that time. We have been informed that Dr. Wylie acted out the *polite gentleman*, and *humble Christian*, so far as to tell Dr. Willson, out of court, that he referred to him in the pastoral address, as the insane person; and added, that he himself was deranged when he wrote the "Sons of Oil;" but there was not one word of this on the floor of synod.

Again, the publication of the original draught, was after the meeting of synod, and the minority did not intimate, till after the adjournment of the court, that they intended to bid defiance to the synod. It was too late then to bring them up; besides, it would have been merely on the ground of a threat. The action was not yet done. It was not foreseen. It could not be; for the document was not yet published.

In this argument, they admit that it was within the province of the sessions and presbyteries to exercise jurisdiction in the case, as also of the general synod. What kind of a creature this subordinate synod is, that seems to have no jurisdiction over its own members, their acts, and their publications, we can hardly conceive. Their members, in defiance of their authority, publish what is thought by the court to be error and slander, but they may not be called to account by the very synod which was disobeyed and offended!

These quondam brethren offer "*matters of grave complaint*," nine in number. The *first* is, that "the men of the pro-re-nata" have called them "*innovators*, and *apostates* from the truth, and *immoral* in life." They do not specify any particular person; but put it on certain persons whom they call "the men of the pro-re-nata." If it has been demonstrated in the former part of this essay, that these complainants have abandoned the standards of the church, and if the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian church are agreeable to the word of God, it would seem to be very plain that they are, what

somebody it appears has called them, "*innovators, apostates* from the truth," and by consequence, *immoral.*

The *second* very grave complaint is, that "the men of the pro-re-nata" have intruded upon peaceful congregations *without* their bounds, without the call, and in contradiction to the wishes, of the proper authorities of these congregations."

Have these men forgotten their visit to New York, and their *peaceful settlement* of Mr. J. N. McLeod, under the staves of the city marshalls, contrary to the wish of the majority of the congregation, out of their bounds, and in violation of the rights and jurisdiction of the southern presbytery? Do, kind, peaceable, mild, orderly and orthodox gentlemen, "pluck the beam out of your own eye."

Their *third* complaint respects these "men of the pro-re-nata confounding the power of superior and inferior judicatories." They instance the cases of the November pro-re-nata, and the presbyterial visit to Argyle. As we have endeavored to establish the legality and rights of the synod in pro-re-nata, nothing farther is added here. As to the visit to Argyle, it simply amounts to this—part of the session, and some of the members of that congregation, requested a presbyterial visit from the northern presbytery, in whose bounds they were. The presbytery, exercising its undoubted right, complied with the request. This is the amazing disorder complained of!

A *fourth* grave complaint is, that of "forming and urging *new* and *other* terms of communion, beside those authorized by general synod." If this has been done by any session or presbytery, it is *exceedingly improper.* It is only surpassed by abandoning the actually existing terms, while professing to respect them. That such a thing was done, we do not believe. That there has been a more minute examination of candidates for the ministry, for a few years past, than during some that preceded, is admitted; but this has grown out of the falling away of some, professing, but not maintaining, the principles of the church. The same is the fact in the general assembly church, for the purpose of preventing the spread of Hopkinsianism, &c.; and while ever there are honest men in the church, desirous of promoting her spiritual interests, there will be more care, both in examination of candidates, and in presbyterial visitations, when men are "turning aside after their crooked way."

The *fifth* "complaint" rings the changes about "disorderly, illegal, intermeddling and cruel *censures* of *innocent men.*" That is, we, mild, orderly, and innocent men, have been *cruelly censured!* Few criminals praise the halter.

A *sixth* "grave complaint" is, the organization of "illegal and incompetent tribunals, to carry into effect unjust and unchristian measures." They say, when called upon they will furnish proof; but they have not done it, and we know they cannot, except they refer to their own conclave.

The *seventh* "complaint" is, that they have been "*slandered*" by the publication of libels against them, and posting them as subjects of censure, for error and immorality," while the "false and vexatious libels were never placed in their hands."

As to *slandering*, that is utterly denied. They were guilty of all alledged against them, and far more than was ever published. The posting of them, or publication of the libel before trial, was probably hasty and improper. We will not attempt to justify it.

The libels were either put into their hands before the spring meeting of synod, or sent to the post offices where they usually receive their letters—and before any act was passed against any of them, they were regularly notified. As to the prudence of suspending them afterward, it is a question on which all the members were not agreed, and are not yet. That they themselves have cut off others from the fellowship of the church, for smaller offences, is known to all of us.

Their *eighth* "grave matter of serious complaint, against the men of the pro-re-nata," is rather amusing, considering the persons making it, and their own *upright*, *humane*, and *Christian conduct*. "We adduce, (say they,) as another ground of *serious complaint*, the writing, publishing, and circulating of falsehoods, numerous, palpable, gross, and absolute. The charitable supposition of mistake, on the part of the writer, or writers of these falsehoods, would afford us unfeigned pleasure. But the nature of the case forbids its admission." They instance as a specimen, the "statement under the names of James Chrystie, Robert Gibson, and Moses Roney."

It is an old adage, "Men who live in glass houses, should not throw stones." Such a series of misrepresentation as these men have made, in all their publications, is without a parallel in the annals of any church. The statement made by James Chrystie, &c., *they know to be true*, and that the writers can prove the truth by the most unquestionable testimony. It has been established under the solemnity of an oath, as to all the leading statements, by a number of witnesses, before the southern presbytery—and these witnesses were, in part, the friends and adherents of Dr. Wylie. Almost every statement in the aforementioned document, can be proven by more than one hundred witnesses, and all of them by at least six competent persons.

We believe them for once, when they say it would give them *unfeigned pleasure* if they could charitably construe the statements into a *mistake*, upon the part of the writers. Glad would they be, were it a mistake; but, alas for them, it is a stubborn fact, and they know it. At first sight, it seems strange that no *specifications* of falsehood, misstatement, or lies, are given in relation to the above document. A moment's reflection will show the reasons. They dared not instance, *in even one case;* for they knew that as the statement was all true, the allegation would be met by direct and ample testimony. It suited their purposes a great deal better to condemn it altogether, and pronounce it all lies and misrepresentations. Besides, to have admitted the general truth, as containing an unvarnished statement of their acts, personal and judicial, would not do, for no ecclesiastical community could or would sustain them, they were so arbitrary, cruel, unjust, and unpresbyterial. Upon a little reflection, they were ashamed of what they had done. They could not justify their acts before the religious community, and not having sufficient magnanimity to declare themselves disorderly, cut the Gordian knot by denying all the facts.

This, like much of their former conduct, goes far to show that they have no fear in slandering their brethren; for they are not apprehensive of "*receiving a professional visit, on the score of uttering libellous matter*" against them, as the Chambers-street session, (adhering to Mr. J. N. McLeod,) say, in p. 51 of the appendix, that they are in relation to Mr. Graham. The contemptible spleen manifested in relation to Mr. Graham, as well as *the only reason of not slandering him*, deserve to be called up again to the attention of Reformed Presbyterians; and the more so, that his name is introduced for the purpose of stabbing the character of the insulted and injured members of the Chambers-street congregation. They say—

"The principal agent, too, of a legal character, whom they employed in their iniquitous prosecution, was, and is, Mr. David Graham, of famous memory. As we have *no disposition* to receive a *professional visit* from this gentleman, on the score of our uttering *libellous matter respecting him*, we say no more on this subject."!! Here they assign as their reason for not slandering, or (to use their own expression) not "*uttering libellous* matter" against Mr. Graham, that they have "*no disposition to receive a professional visit from that gentleman.*" It appears that they are afraid of the civil law, if they would slander Mr. Graham. If it was *truth* that they proposed "uttering against him," what had they to fear?—especially from *the moral ordinance of God!* Perhaps, in no part of the miserable pamphlet under consideration, is there such an explicit avowal of their recklessness, as this, in which they say to the world, because Mr. Graham is "the legal advocate" of the people who left Mr. McLeod, they would *utter libellous matter* if they did not fear a professional visit.

But why are they so waspish about the selection of Mr. Graham, as "the legal advocate" of the Chambers-street congregation? And why was Mr. Graham selected as the advocate? The answer is easy. Mr. Graham is an eminent counsellor—at the head of his profession—gentlemanly in his deportment—and unusually eloquent. Besides, no gentleman of his profession, in the United States, knows more about the distinctive principles, laws and usages of Reformed Presbyterians, than Mr. Graham—perhaps none so much. He was peculiarly qualified to detect the disorderly and iniquitous conduct of the Chambers-street session, and the Philadelphia presbytery. While in addition to this, Mr. Graham had experienced "*the tender mercies*" of Dr. Wylie, and some others, in days of old, and could therefore enter more fully into the oppression and imposition practised upon the Covenanters of Chambers-street church, than any other person. Yet, *honest men*, they forbear from slandering him. Why? Let them tell their own tale—because they "*are not disposed to receive a professional visit from that gentleman, on the score of uttering libellous matter respecting him.*"! Mr. Graham is certainly laid under *many obligations* to them, for their kindness and forbearance. It is hoped that he will be *duly* grateful.

It is employed as an argument for keeping Mr. Crawford in the moderator's chair, while under suspension, "that they could know nothing judicially, till after the court was constituted by Mr. Crawford; and that the Eastern Subordinate Synod required them *before* they were in court, to prejudge

that which must be judged *afterward*, in the court." To this it is replied, that the argument would be equally good in a case of the greatest scandal. Undoubtedly, in such case, it would have to be tried *afterward*, though on account of the scandal, he should be denied a seat for the present, viz. at the constitution. Even in a case of *fama clamosa*, a moderator under scandal, would not, with a court that respected itself, be permitted to preside; much less when he had been actually tried and suspended. Besides, the intention was not to inform the court, *as constituted*, of Mr. Crawford's suspension, but the *individual constituent members*, before the constitution, that they might not act a disorderly part, and degrade themselves by permitting him to occupy the chair till the former act should be confirmed or reversed, as the case might be. And farther, no person, or court, required them to prejudge the matter, but merely to receive an *official statement* of a transaction, which they had power afterward to reverse, but not without a judicial investigation. And, finally, *it was themselves that required the members to prejudge the affair;* for, on no terms would they admit members to a seat, but on the ground of declaring the illegality of the *pro-re-nata* meeting of the Eastern Subordinate Synod. This was with them a sine qua non, and that before there had ever been a legal investigation of said meeting, or of the spring meeting which succeeded it. If the argument has any weight, it is entirely against themselves; for they, not we, *required the whole business to be prejudged, and a synod condemned*, for the purpose of keeping Mr. Crawford in the chair. That this is a true statement, see their own minutes in the case of Rev. Robert McKee. He made application, on certificate from his own presbytery, to have a seat in court, even under the aforesaid suspended minister, which was denied him until he would declare the illegality of the pro-re-nata; and this was before they had judicially entered upon the question of its legality or illegality.

CONCLUSION.

Before closing this pamphlet, the attention of the reader is called to document No. 16, p. 49, Eleventh-street appendix, where the session of the Chambers-street church, (as they style themselves,) say, in regard to the property of said church—"We beg leave to submit the following facts to your reverend body. That property would appear, from due examination, to have cost the congregation the sum of about *thirty thousand dollars*. Free of all incumbrance, we believe it to be at present worth at least *twenty thousand dollars;* of this *twenty*, nearly *eighteen* were contributed by Dr. McLeod and his connexions and friends, both within and out of the church; while, upon our records, we can find but about *two thousand* coming from the adherents of the *pro-re-nata*, who now claim the whole."

From the above statement it appears, that the property *cost* the congregation about *thirty thousand dollars:* and how is this sum made up? They inform us that nearly *eighteen thousand dollars* were contributed by Dr. McLeod and his connexions and friends, both within and out of the church; and they can find but about *two thousand* coming from the adherents of the pro-re-nata, as they style the other contributors. These men seem to be profoundly skilled in arithmetic. They have discovered that *eighteen thousand* and *two thousand* make *thirty thousand*, the original cost of the Chambers-street property! This is no common calculation. A boy working in addition, could not have discovered it. The profound calculation, and astonishing discovery, were left for the Rev. J. N. McLeod and his session to make, and lay before a New-Light synod, in Eleventh-street, Philadelphia, and spread before the church, in a printed document—*eighteen and two are thirty!* Of this there can be no doubt, for the original cost was thirty thousand dollars! Dr. McLeod, and his connexions and friends, gave eighteen thousand, and the pro-re-nata men gave two thousand. Ye money-making men, look at this! If you have to pay thirty thousand dollars, the way to do it, and pocket ten thousand dollars, is to employ *New-Light men* to pay eighteen thousand, and *pro-re-nata* men to pay two thousand, and your bill is settled!

EXAMPLE.

New-Light men, - - -	$ 18,000,
Pro-re-nata do. - - -	2,000,
Total,	$30,000!!!!

But again, passing over this strange way of making up *thirty thousand dollars*, it is worth while to examine whether they have been *faithful trustees*, in the management of said property.

It is well known that the two lots in Chambers-street, purchased some thirty years ago for less than *three thousand* dollars, are at present worth *at*

least twenty thousand—and also that the lot in Reed-street, which cost *three* thousand, is now worth *more than four thousand:* therefore, taking this increase of property into consideration, it is evident that the present value of the whole ought to be from *forty-five* to *fifty thousand dollars*, if true, as they state, that the cost to the congregation was thirty thousand. But it appears that the whole is at present, free of all incumbrance, worth *only twenty thousand*. What has become of the balance of *twenty-five*, or *thirty thousand dollars?* Certainly they ought to account for the loss of so large a sum. Mr. Bowden and his friends have been blamed for entering a suit before the vice chancellor, to protect the property; but is it strange that an application should be made to him for its protection, when under the management of such men? Who can hesitate to say that they have either greatly *abused their trust:* or, in their desire to make the contributions of Dr. McLeod, his connexions and friends, very great in proportion to that of the others, have *utterly disregarded truth*, *insulted the common sense* of any one who can calculate the amount of eighteen and two thousands, and shown the public that the party misnamed the general synod, could condescend to any thing that might possibly favor those who would acknowledge their *usurped authority.**

But, after all, whatever Dr. McLeod collected from any quarter, was for the congregation to which he was then attached as its minister, and to this collection, each member had an equal right—the poorest member in the church, as much as the most wealthy—those who contributed, as much as those who did not contribute, provided he then was, or hereafter would become, a member. It was *a gift never to be recalled*—a gift bestowed upon the Reformed Presbyterian church, maintaining its *distinctive* and *peculiar principles*—and never to be bartered away from the original design, but by the *unanimous consent* and *vote* of those who formed the congregation adhering to the standards, and maintaining the original principles.

Reformed Presbyterians, let us deliberately reflect upon the times and circumstances in which our lot is cast. We have lived to see another division in our section of the church; and this, as on former occasions, brought about by the declension of leading and respectable ministers. Admitting their motives to have been pure, and that they really think our fathers have erred in not recognizing the American government as the moral ordinance of God—that they have also erred in viewing the ancient covenants as binding upon us as a people, even in this land—still, it is for you to weigh and judge—to inquire whether it may not be true, that "the leaders of this people cause them to err." You cannot soon forget the fact, or the circumstances of the defection in 1782—when, led by Messrs. Cuthbertson, Linn, and Dobbins, the greater part of the Covenanters in America left the distinctive standing of the church, on the head of civil magistracy, and civil covenants, and formed a union with a portion of seceders, thereby setting up a new denomination, called the Associate Reformed church.

They still continued to profess a great respect for the principles of Reformed Presbyterians. Many were misled, and left their Testimony. The church in Europe uttered a warning voice against the evil. She sent out some

* See page 61.

of her ministers to America, to arrest the downward course. Messrs. Reid, McGarrah, King and McKinney, visited and comforted our scattered societies, and desolate Covenanters, and brought back many of the scattered flock to "the good old ways." Other men succeeded them. Their efforts were blessed, and as a church we appeared to prosper for a time. We had, in a great measure, ceased to be a by-word, and all that seemed necessary for us, was to persevere in the way that we had chosen—the way in which our fathers walked.

No confidence can be placed in man. The very men who were the most rigid advocates of the covenanted testimony, and who taught the rising youth in the church's ministry, to avoid connexion with the American government, and who commended the aged Covenanters for standing aloof from the civil institutions of our land, have lately seen with other eyes, and even reproach those who are continuing to teach and practice as they themselves did in other years; and all this while the general government is in no measure changed as to its constitution or administration. They now view this government as the *ordinance of God*, and yet, strange to tell, they make it a matter of forbearance whether our people incorporate with, and acknowledge the government, or refuse to recognize it as God's ordinance! If it is God's moral ordinance, undoubtedly we are forbidden to resist it, on pain of damnation, Rom. xiii. 2. Here there is left no room for forbearance. To hold ecclesiastical communion with men who refuse to recognize God in his own ordinance, is certainly sinful; yet is it urged that it should be a matter of forbearance in the whole church.

Fellow professors, let us not submit to be led away from the truth. If we have, as a church, been publicly resisting the ordinance of God, in our standards, and in our public ministrations, let us humble our souls before God for our iniquity—let us be sorry for our sin—let us ask the rulers of the land, (those *very pious men*, who manage our public affairs; the men who *fear God, hate covetousness, respect the Sabbath*, and exercise *more than a parent's care* over the church of God!) let us intreat them to forgive our trespass against them, as *God's ministers for good*—to pray to God for us, that our sin may be blotted out—(for surely they are *generally* men of prayer!)

But the subject is too serious for irony. You know, brethren, that our rulers are *not generally pious*—that the nation, as such, does *not acknowledge the law of God, or his blessed Son*—and that it *does retain* unoffending men in perpetual bondage; and furnishes as much of a parent's care to the Unitarian, Socinian, Universalist, and idolator, as to the true worshipper of Jesus Christ. Can you then hesitate about what is your duty?—or what is the moral estimate to be set upon this government?—or whether our fathers were mistaken as to the moral character and genius of the American constitution?

A few years will bring to shame those who have seceded from the testimony: and those of them who have for a season been under deception, will return to follow the footsteps of the flock; and encourage others to "hold fast the profession of their faith, without wavering," knowing that Israel's safety ever has been to "dwell alone, and not be numbered among the nations."

Brethren, *what is to be gained by an incorporation with the government at*

this time? Let us weigh this matter with Christian candor. Let us essay to balance the *loss* and *gain*.

To incorporate with it, in order to be consistent, we must abandon our Testimony, or make a fundamental alteration in it—we must say to the world, that this government is in voluntary subjection to Messiah; formally recognizes him; and is regulated by the divine law—and that even slavery does not destroy its moral character. We must say, that, though as a church we will not permit a slave-holder to enjoy ecclesiastical communion, yet, we will recognize the immoral ruler as God's magistrate, who holds his fellow men in an unjust bondage.—We must say that our fathers have greatly mistaken the moral character of this government, and thereby led their children into a sinful course of reproach upon God's moral ordinance.

If our Testimony is erroneous, let us abandon it—if the fathers have slandered the nation, and we have followed in their wicked course—if the American government is the ordinance of God, let us speedily retrace our steps, and *acknowledge God in his own institution.*

Even upon a supposition that we could do all this, and feel free in doing so, what might we expect to gain? Could such a handful as we are, place good religious men in office? Could we affect the elections, from the introduction of the president to his chair, to that of the constable to his office? Could we advance ourselves to place, and power, and influence? Possibly some of us might obtain the high office of a road-master, street-commissioner, or petty constable! We might become "bustling politicians, and swagger at the ballot boxes," and strive in party politics; but how would this reform the general government, or keep us unspotted from the world? How would this advance our testimony in behalf of Messiah's rights, or the rights of God? It is much more easy to become contaminated by an ensnaring world, than to reform the profligate; and while there remains a *single doubt* whether this government possesses a Scriptural magistracy, it were wisdom to stand aloof, and let political men, who delight in intrigue, pursue their course alone; while we, in our proper places, in a discreet, modest, and affectionate manner, warn them of their sins. As religious men, we will find enough to occupy our minds, in preparing for eternity. Why all this bustle about politics? Why rend the church, and distract the heritage of God, for the sake of worldly politics? Soon will we, this world, and its politics, come to an end; but the church of God shall endure, and we are candidates for eternity. Oh, brethren, who ever increased in holiness by mingling in the strife of earthly politics? You are not required to abuse the land of your choice, or of your birth, or to overlook the *many excellencies* that belong to our national or states' governments; but you are urged, and you have engaged, to reject every government that does not yield obedience and respect to "the Prince of the kings of the earth."

That the Lord may bless this feeble effort, causing it to be a mean of opening the eyes of the deluded—of sustaining the judicatories of the church—inducing professing Covenanters to ponder the path of their feet—and wanderers to return to their duty, is the earnest wish and prayer of the church's servant, for Jesus' sake—

R. GIBSON.

ADDENDA.

A specimen of the deceitful manner in which our quondam brethren have conducted their affairs, is found in the republication of the minutes of the Irish synod, with an APPENDIX, (from the "Belfast News-Letter,") never sanctioned by the Irish synod, and containing *a garbled statement* of the transactions and arguments, from "a paper edited by a determined enemy of the Reformed Presbyterian church, a Mr. Knowles, an old *renegado Covenanter* from the neighborhood of Ballymena." This statement is published as if it had the sanction of the Irish synod, and no one would suspect it to be otherwise, but those who know the character of the *society* and connexions of those who republished the document. No part of the above appendix was ever published by the Irish Synod. A plain reader, who had never seen the Irish Minutes, would think it had.

The design of the publication is, to show that the Irish synod was disposed to abandon the sentiment of the civil magistrate having any power, circa sacra—as also to hold out the idea, that said synod condemned the doctrines taught by the Editor of "the Covenanter."

The eye must have been *jaundiced*, that could see any thing favoring such a construction, either in the *minutes* generally, or the *resolutions* in particular. In the *misstatements* and *perversions* of the Belfast News Letter, there is ground for such construction; but not in the minutes or resolutions. Why did not "the FRIENDS of *reformation principles* and PROGRESSIVE *improvement* in the city of New York," publish the account as given in "the Guardian," a Belfast paper, conducted by a disinterested man, and not *an apostate Covenanter?* The reason is evident. They did not wish to publish the true state of the case.

That our readers may judge for themselves, the resolutions, as they passed the Irish synod, are given, and are as follows:

"The synod, after hearing the entire matter in dispute between the Rev. Thomas Houston, and the Rev. John Paul, have adopted the following resolutions—the first series relating to the doctrine, and the second relating to the conduct of the parties:—

I.

"Resolved, 1. This synod declare, that by the appointment of the Father, our Lord Jesus Christ is head over all things—all power in heaven and on earth being committed to him.

"2. That this authority is given to be exercised by him as Mediator, for the benefit of his body, the church, which is the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

"3. That according to this plain doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator, is at once the King of Zion and the Prince of the kings of the earth, and Governor among the nations.

"4. That it is the duty of all people, nations, and languages, to serve Him; willingly acknowledging his authority over them, submitting to his law,

and taking his Holy Word as the infallible rule to guide their whole moral conduct, in every situation, and in all their different relations.

"5. That it is the indispensable duty of nations, to whom the Word of God has come, to frame their constitutions of civil government in agreeableness to the revealed will of God; to set up as rulers over them, according to his command, persons Scripturally qualified, "able men, such as fear God—men of truth, hating covetousness;" to enact, in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, all their laws in conformity with the Holy Scriptures, for the glory of God, the benefit of civil society, the prosperity of the church, the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the happiness of mankind; and that, with these views, it is the duty of a Christian and Scripturally enlightened nation, in their national capacity, to employ all Scriptural means to support and promote true and undefiled religion, and to discountenance and suppress error, ungodliness, and immorality.

"6. That upon these principles, it is the duty of the Christian magistrate, ruling in a Christian nation, to execute the wholesome and Scriptural laws established by the community, and, according to the power vested in him as the minister of God for good, to exercise his office and employ his authority in a Scriptural manner, for the good of the church of Christ, and in support of the authority both of the first and second tables of the divine law.

"7. That the Synod declare their continued and stedfast adherence to the subordinate standards of the Reformed Presbyterian church, approving the great Scriptural principles of our Covenanted Reformation, both in church and state.

"8. That it is matter of lamentation that the nations do not now submit themselves to Messiah, while it is matter of rejoicing that the time is coming when all dominions shall serve and obey him; and, in the mean time, it is the imperative duty of the church to hold forth to the world a distinct and explicit testimony in behalf of the supreme authority of the Redeemer, and in behalf of the duty of individuals, and churches, and nations, submitting to his government, and obeying his laws; and the synod consider that it would be injudicious and unwise, at the present time, to attempt entering into detail of the several things which ought to be done by the Christian magistrate at that happy period to which we look forward, believing assuredly that such matters will be easily determined at that future period of light and love.

"9. The Synod further consider it their duty to declare, that they abhor and condemn all persecuting principles—that they utterly disclaim the doctrine that religion may be propagated by force, or that men ought to be punished with death because they differ from us in opinion.

II.

"Resolved, 1. That the Rev. Thomas Houston, however good his intentions may have been, acted injudiciously in assuming the management of the Periodical contemplated by Synod; and that, in having violated his compact with other Ministers, whose assistance had been pledged, his conduct gave occasion to distrust and disorder.

"2. That in case one Minister feel hurt by statements made by another Minister, he should have recourse to the method of redress prescribed in Scripture; and we therefore most decidedly disapprove of Members of Synod

writing in opposition to each other, as calculated to introduce confusion, and to bring Church government and discipline into contempt.

"3. That the Rev. John Paul and the Rev. Thomas Houston, acquiescing in the above Resolutions, we judge it inexpedient to specify more particularly our disapprobation of statements made, or conduct pursued, by either of the Brethren in this matter.

"4. That we are truly grateful to the Head of the Church, that mutual explanations and candid discussions have preserved our Testimony; and we trust that, under the direction of Him who is King of saints and nations, "the unity of the Spirit" will be preserved "in the bonds of peace."

The *first* resolution declares the universal government of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The *second*, that it is given to be exercised by him *as mediator*, for the benefit of the church.

The *third*, that he is both King of Zion, and Prince of the kings of the earth, and Governor among the nations.

The *fourth*, that it is the duty of all people, *nations*, and languages, to serve him, acknowledge his *authority*, submit to *his law*, and take his *Holy Word* as the infallible *rule* to *guide their moral conduct*, in every situation and in *all* their different *relations*.

The *fifth* declares that it is the INDISPENSABLE DUTY of nations that enjoy the Bible, to frame their *constitutions* in agreeableness thereto—to set up rulers with *Scriptural qualifications*—to *enact in obedience to Christ*, and in *conformity* with the Scriptures—and in their *national capacity* to employ all Scriptural means to *support* and *promote true and undefiled religion*, and to *discountenance* and *suppress* ERROR, ungodliness, and immorality.

Query. Does this resolution *condemn* Mr. Houston in his assertion that the civil magistrate should "*suppress error and idolatry*," or Mr. Paul, who says, that God has reserved that in his own hand, to be punished in a future state?

The *sixth* declares that the Christian magistrate owes it as *a duty*, to *exercise his office*, and *employ his authority*, in support of both the FIRST and SECOND tables of the divine law.

Query. Does the second commandment belong to *any* of these tables? If it does, the resolution *supports* Mr. Houston, *not* Mr. Paul.

The *seventh* declares an *adherence to the standards*, *approving the Scriptural principles* of our covenanted Reformation, both *in church* and *state*.

Query. Did the synod mean to say that there were *some anti-Scriptural principles* respecting the above reformation, of which they did not approve—or is it an unqualified approbation of the standards?

The *eighth* is a lamentation that the nations *do not submit to Messiah*—a belief that the time *will come* when they *will do so*—and an unwillingness to enter into *a detail* of the several things which ought to be done at such happy period.

The *ninth* disclaims *all persecuting principles*, and that men should be punished with *death*, because they *differ from us in opinion*. So say both Mr. Houston and Mr. Paul. This last resolution is only a confirmation of the declared sentiments of every member of the Reformed Presbyterian church.

The second series of resolutions refers to the conduct of the parties.

The first resolution simply states that Mr. Houston acted INJUDICIOUSLY, and gave OCCASION to distrust and disorder. It neither impugns his *doctrines* nor *motives*, nor says that he *caused* distrust, but merely "*gave occasion.*"

The second reprobates ministers in the same communion writing against each other, in place of pursuing the Scriptural manner of obtaining redress: where allusion is principally had to Mr. Paul, who instead of applying to Mr. Houston's presbytery for redress, *betook himself to the Belfast News Letter*, which, (from a Covenanter in Stewarton, Ayreshire, Scotland,) we are informed, is under the direction of "a renegado apostate Covenanter, who is a most bitter enemy to the Reformed Presbyterian Church."